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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

AND

MEMOIR

BY HIS SONS

REV. DAVID K. GUTHRIE

AND

CHARLES J. GUTHRIE, M.A.

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IN TWO VOLUMES

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIR

OF

THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

*** *The* FRONTISPIECE *to this Volume is copied from a Photograph by Mr. Moffat, of Edinburgh.*

Yours faithfully
Thomas Guthrie

TO

OUR MOTHER,

WITH REVERENCE, AFFECTION, AND GRATITUDE.

PREFACE.

By his Will, Dr. Guthrie directed that all his papers should be placed in the hands of the two members of his family whose names appear on this volume—to be used for publication at their discretion, with the advice of his son-in-law, the Rev. William Welsh. These papers included an unfinished Autobiography, several sketches of eminent men whom he had known, and a mass of general correspondence.

One obvious difficulty and disadvantage under which we labour in compiling a memoir of our father arises from our connection with him. A biographer who is a near relative—like a draughtsman placed too near the object he would represent—is doubtless in danger of taking a one-sided view of his subject.

There is, however, this counterbalancing advantage in our case: we were of necessity familiar with the personal habits, the tastes, the opinions, and everyday life of Dr. Guthrie in a way that no one outside his family could be. And besides, our business is not to attempt an estimate of our father's gifts and services—for this, our relationship to him would totally unfit us—but to present

a narrative of his life and labours, so that those who knew him may recognise the portrait, and those who did not may thereby gain some conception of the man he was.

Our first care was naturally with the Autobiography. Being unfinished and never revised, it became a question whether it should be published separately and as a fragment, or incorporated with a completed memoir. The former was deemed the better course. For the sake of convenience, it has been broken up into chapters, and a few short notes appended; but no alterations have been made in the text save such as seemed unavoidable from the circumstances, that Dr. Guthrie was prevented from revising it himself, and that it is given to the world during the lifetime of various persons to whom he alludes in the course of his narrative.

Our next care was as to the Memoir needful to continue the record of our father's life. On reading the Autobiography, it seemed that there were some points wholly omitted, and others merely glanced at by him on which the public would desire information. This might have been given by adding cumbrous notes to the Autobiography itself, or by subjoining a lengthened Appendix; but we judged it better to incorporate such material in the earlier chapters of the Memoir proper, while the sketches written by Dr. Guthrie will be embodied in their proper place in the course of our narrative.

In the construction of the Memoir we shall not confine ourselves to the strictly chronological order, but arrange the narrative under leading subjects, such as the

following:—Early Life in Brechin; College Life to Ordination; Arbirlot; Settlement in Edinburgh—state of his parish there; The Disruption; The Manse Fund; The Ministry; Ragged Schools; Interest in Foreign Churches and Countries; Domestic and Social Life; Latest Views on Leading Questions; Closing Days.

The aim which the Editors propose to themselves throughout the Memoir is to preserve, as much as it is possible, the autobiographical form—that is, to let Dr. Guthrie tell the story of his own life in his own words. Personal references, personal reminiscences, formed a marked characteristic of his style, both in speaking and writing; in fact, no one who has not had occasion to examine his sermons and speeches, can form any conception of how largely his allusions and illustrations were drawn from incidents in the course of his own life.

The Editors, in conjunction with Mr. Welsh, desire to express special obligations to the Rev. Dr. Hanna and the Rev. Professor Blaikie, on whose kind counsel they have been permitted to draw in connection with their work. Many valued friends of Dr. Guthrie have contributed important matter in the shape of personal reminiscences and of letters; and to all of them they desire to tender most grateful thanks.

D. K. G.
C. J. G.

EDINBURGH: *November*, 1873.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

PREFATORY NOTE.

VERY soon after 1865, when Dr. Guthrie retired from regular pulpit and pastoral work, he conceived the idea of writing an Autobiography; but new engagements of many kinds prevented his commencing it before the summer of 1868.

The various dates indicated in the course of the narrative will show that it was not a continuous composition. Written very much as a relaxation, Dr. Guthrie put it together by snatches, and at uncertain intervals. The weakness attending his last illness (from October to February) prevented his undertaking any composition requiring sustained thought: anxious, however, to employ the time he now felt to be more than ever uncertain, he made an effort to proceed with his Autobiography, and the tedium of these months was relieved by the interest he found in thus recalling the past. He wrote out the portion between the dates "November, 1872" and "4th January, 1873" in pencil, and when increasing weakness necessitated dictation, the remainder was taken down from his lips by one of his daughters. Thereafter, the subject was still in his thoughts; and he remarked that one of the objects for which, were it God's will, he should desire to be spared, would be to complete his Autobiography. It was literally the last thing he worked at on earth. He had to lay it finally aside while in the midst of describing the Disruption conflict; and, in a few days thereafter, done with all conflicts, he entered the Rest that remaineth.

Part I.

BIRTH, CHILDHOOD, AND SCHOOL-DAYS.

1803—1814.

INCHGRUNDLE, LOCHLEE, FORFARSHIRE: *July* 13, 1868.

YESTERDAY I completed my sixty-fifth year: and now, amid the pleasant solitudes of this picturesque glen, where, through the kindness of Lord Dalhousie, and of his father, I have enjoyed for nineteen years a holiday retreat, I begin, what I have long purposed, a sketch of my life; the object I have chiefly in view being to thread on that, some of those important events and great changes I have lived to see, and in some of which I have been called to take a part. Such a sketch, however slightly or roughly drawn, will be read with interest by my descendants. It may also, if it should ever appear in print, prove instructive to others, and glorifying to Him, through whose great goodness and mercy I have been spared to nearly the three score years and ten that are understood to form still, as in old times, the allotted term of life.

With care and prudence, human life may be extended considerably beyond the ordinary period. The truth is that few people die a natural death. Some are murdered;

but the greater part, who have arrived at years of discretion, commit suicide of a sort, through their neglect of the ordinary rules of health, or the injudicious use of meat, drink, or medicine. Hence few have ever seen a person who has reached a hundred years; and any who have attained that patriarchal age are world's-wonders, whom people go to see.

I myself, though I have travelled much both at home and abroad, have seen only one person above a hundred years old. She kept a stone-ware shop at Coleraine in Ireland, and was, if I may be permitted the Irishism, the "lion" of the place. On entering the shop to buy something, that I might see her, I found an old grey-haired woman behind the counter, but this was her daughter, "an auld young lass" of eighty. On learning this, I said I wished to be served by her mother, that I might have it to say that I had not only seen, but bought from a woman a hundred and seven years old. On this, coming at once from a back room to the call of her daughter, the old lady, no beldam, appeared, walking slowly and softly, but straight as a rush; the only marks of her great age being the eyes, bright, however, with intelligence, deeply sunk in their sockets, and her face wearing a very bleached and bloodless hue.

The late Marquis of Lansdowne (a minister of State, who was in his attire and manner very like a polished and courteous minister of the Gospel) used to boast that he sat, on first entering the House of Commons,

beside one who had been a member of the House in the time of George II.

But the case of Dr. Alison, the celebrated physician, and hardly less famous philanthropist, one of the best and greatest men I ever knew, was much more extraordinary. It recalls the days of the patriarchs. He, dying in 1859, had spoken to a man who had spoken to a man who had been at Flodden Field, a battle fought so far back as 1513. There was, so to speak, but one man between him and an event that occurred more than three hundred years before. What seems incredible is thus explained:—when a mere child, Dr. Alison had been put into the arms of a man in Aberdeenshire, who lived, if I remember aright, to the age of a hundred and thirty; and this old highland patriarch had once met with Jenkins—who survived till he was a hundred and sixty-nine years old, and had when a boy carried arrows to the English archers who fought and won the field of Flodden.

One of the most curious cases of old age I ever heard of was told me by Lord Ardmillan, who, to the integrity of a judge, and the graces of a genius, and the piety of a Christian, adds such a knack for story-telling as makes his society quite delightful. Mr. F. Dundas, M.P., a friend of his, having heard, when on a visit to Shetland, of a very old man who lived on the mainland, or one of its islands, went to see him. On approaching his cottage, he saw an aged but hale-looking man at work in a field close by, and not doubting

but that this was the person he was in search of, he made up to him, but had no sooner begun to moralise on topics suitable to old age and the close of life, than the person he addressed turned round on him to say, "It'll be my faythe ye've come to see; there he is, sitting at the cheek o' the door!" And there, on walking up to the house, he saw a grey-haired, venerable patriarch, sitting on a stone by the door, warming his cold blood in the sunshine. On going up to him, and introducing himself as a traveller, who had come out of his way to see one who had seen so many years, he was much surprised when this old man, pointing his staff to the door, said, "It'll be my faythe ye've come to see; he's in the house, there!" He entered: and there, in one who, with bleared eyes and furrowed brow, cowered over a peat fire, while he stretched out his palsied hands to catch its warmth, and over whose shoulders, bent under the weight of years, fell a few spare silver locks, he saw the very picture of a great old age. He was sure that he had now got hold of the veritable man. Raising his voice, for he found the aged patriarch deaf almost as a door-post, he let him know the purpose of his visit. But what was his astonishment when this withered form by the "chimney neuk," pointing to the door of an inner room, said, "Oh, it'll be my faythe ye've come to see; he's ben there!" and an old woman who sat by the fire, added, "Surely, sir, you'll not go till you've seen 'the Lucky Dad?'" And "ben there," to be sure, lying in a

"box-bed" he found the father of the other three generations, alive indeed, but more like a dried mummy than a living man.

It may not be desirable to live on into second childhood—man, in such a condition, presenting physically and mentally, as well as morally and spiritually, the saddest of all ruins. Yet the glory of God and the good of mankind require that we do ourselves no harm, but, devoting it to useful, noble, and holy purposes, spin out our life till the thread snaps through sheer tenuity and weakness.

People should shine as lights in the world, but not put the candle in a draught or door-way. It is better, no doubt, as they say, to wear out than to rust out; but the weights of a clock may be made so heavy as to damage the machinery and make it run down before its proper time. We have no more right to shorten our own than another's life, and the duty of self-preservation which instinct teaches, is one which the Bible enforces. A knowledge of the ordinary rules of health ought, therefore, to be regarded as one of the most useful branches of education; and considering how easily they may be acquired, and how many diseases are spread and lives lost through the neglect of them, it is astonishing that they are not taught in all our schools. Were these rules learned to be practised, and were people to observe moderation in all things—abstaining especially from every cup stronger than that which cheers but not inebriates—and were our working classes as well fed, clothed, and

housed as they might be were they to abstain from the use of expensive and dangerous luxuries, thousands of lives would be saved, thousands of accidents and diseases averted, and the three score years and ten would probably prove not the ordinary limit, but the ordinary average of human life—as many living beyond that period as died before it.

"What's in a name?" asks the Poet. Yet some names are very awkward—an American minister of my acquaintance had the misfortune to be called Merryman; he, only less unfortunate than another in that country of strange names, the Rev. Mr. Scamp, who, "scamp" though in a sense he was, lived, as I read in an American paper, much esteemed, and died greatly lamented. Some names, on the other hand, are honourable; and have, or at least should have, an influence for good on those who bear them; and in that case, in the words of the wise man, "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

Such a name is mine. It is an ancient one; the name of a very old family in Forfarshire. Greater honour still —in these words,

"FAMOUS GUTHRIE'S HEAD—"*

it stands on the Martyrs' Monument in the Greyfriars Churchyard of Edinburgh—being, with the exception of

* Rev. James Guthrie of Stirling was executed at Edinburgh on 1st June, 1661. His head was affixed to the Nether Bow Port.

Argyll's and Renwick's, the only name, of the 18,000 that perished in the days of the Covenant, that has the honour of standing on that famous and sacred stone. James Guthrie was described by Oliver Cromwell as "the short man that would not bow," and his fate forecast by his cousin William Guthrie, who said on one occasion, "Ah, James, you will have the advantage of me, for you will die honourably before many witnesses, with a rope about your neck, and I will die whining upon a little straw." This famous martyr was of the family of Guthrie of Guthrie; while William, who was banished from his charge and home for the cause of the Covenant, was also, like most of the leading Covenanters, a well-born man. He died in his bed; and lies within the old Cathedral Church of Brechin, my native place, below the seat belonging to Pitforthie, his ancestral estate, a mile from the town. He was the author of that precious book, "The Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ," of which it is related that the great Dr. Owen said, on one occasion, taking a "little gilt copy" of it out of his pocket—"It is my *Vade-mecum*, and I carry it and the Sedan New Testament still about me. I have wrote several folios, but there is more divinity in it than them all."

To establish, what certain circumstances made highly probable, the connection of my family with those heroes of the Covenant, to whom, under God—as is now all but universally admitted—Great Britain largely owes her civil and religious privileges, was an object of my ambi-

tion. I failed; yet am conscious that the idea and probability of this has had a happy influence on my public life, in determining me to contend, and suffer if need be, for the rights of Christ's crown and the liberties of his Church. Let me be thankful for this. All help was needed in the struggle which terminated in the Disruption of 1843. In these trying times not a few made shipwreck of their character, lacking what such a crisis required, a little natural courage and much grace, or, what perhaps best describes my own case, much natural courage and a little grace.

Through my ancestors, so far as I can trace them, I can claim to be the seed of the righteous:—a higher honour than the "blue blood" some boast of, though why noble blood should be called "blue," which is venous and polluted blood, I have yet to learn.

My grandfather, on my father's side, was a farmer, as his father had been before him. The latter was a tenant of that Earl of Panmure who lost both title and estates for taking part in the Rebellion of 1715. My worthy ancestor, accounting his lease too dear, saw in the rebellion a favourable opportunity to get rid of a bad bargain. So, when Panmure mustered his men, he appeared among them on horseback, booted, spurred, and armed for battle. But he was foiled. "No, no!" said the Earl, dismissing him to more peaceful toils, "go you home, David, and attend to your farm."

A circumstance in my great-grandfather's history is

worth preserving, as, while honourable to his piety and courage, illustrative of the promises and providence of God. In his days, Willison, author of the well-known "Sacramental Meditations" which bear his name, was a minister in Brechin. He had been placed there by the Government, of which he was an able and ardent supporter, to keep down the Jacobites, who were strong in that district — most of the landed proprietors in the neighbourhood, and indeed throughout the whole of Angus, with the Earls of Panmure, Southesk, and Airlie at their head, being vehement partizans of the elder Pretender, and his son Prince Charlie. Willison, though supported by the townspeople—who were chiefly Presbyterians, while the landed interest was on the side of Episcopacy and the Steuarts—had a difficult and also dangerous post to hold. But, in him and his successor Blair, and such Presbyterian ministers, the Popish, Episcopalian, and Jacobite party found that they had to deal with men of determination, and of courage equal to the occasion. Unable to beat Willison by fair, the adherents of the House of Steuart resorted to foul means; raising calumnious reports against his character, and suborning false witnesses to swear it away. Wearied at length of fighting with this nest of hornets, on being called to a church in Dundee he accepted the call: but when the time to shift his quarters came, it was in vain that he applied to one farmer after another to drive his furniture to that town. Overawed by their landlords, they would not venture to help him, either for love or

money. Hearing this, my great-grandfather, who held a farm in the parish, stepped forward, volunteering to do this kindness to God's servant, cost what it might. A brave exploit in days when farmers were the slaves of lairds, and, worse than submitting, as now, to be driven up to the polling-booth, went out at their bidding to fight—some for George and some for Charlie. Years after this happened, the Duke of Cumberland passed through Brechin at the head of a large force, to fight the bloody but decisive battle of Culloden. There was a very old saintly woman, about ninety years of age, who used to come to our house when I was a boy, in the character rather than in the capacity of a seamstress (her sewing being but a cover and delicate way of giving her the charity which it would have pained her to receive otherwise); I have heard her tell that she saw Cumberland enter the town, and how he was received with joy by the townspeople, most of whom, being Presbyterians, were distinguished from the landed interest by their cordial support of the Government; and how, nevertheless, being suspicious of poison and foul play, as they supposed, the Duke declined a glass of wine offered him, as he crossed the bridge, by some enthusiastic supporter of King George, the Protestant cause, and liberty. Cumberland was hard up for means to carry northwards his baggage and guns: so he made a raid on the farms, and cleared them of every available horse—my great-grandfather's horses among the rest; the ploughs in consequence were left to stand idle in the furrows, and

ruin stared every farmer in the face. In this dilemma it occurred to my *forebear* to make his case known to Willison, who of all men was most able and most likely to serve him at this pinch. Willison had not forgotten the brave farmer's kindness to himself in other days. He instantly wrote to the Duke. In a few days thereafter the horses were neighing in David Guthrie's stables, and while neighbouring farms lay waste, the ploughboys were whistling in the good man's fields. Here was a remarkable instance, in God's providence, of bread cast on the waters returning, not even many days hence.

My grandfather, the son of this man, being then about fourteen years old, remembered the Rebellion of 1745, and indeed owed his comfortable and rather affluent circumstances to the troubled state of the country between the Revolution of 1688 and the fatal and final battle of Culloden. During that period, both life and property in Scotland were held by a precarious tenure. Proprietors found it difficult to get tenants for their farms—any one bold enough to invest money in the cultivation of the soil. I have heard that about that time nearly the whole parish of Tweedsmuir in the county of Peebles was without a tenant who paid rent; and this is true at any rate, that to induce farmers to take their land, landowners offered it both at very low rents and for very long leases. Nineteen years to start with, and afterwards the length of two lives, were the terms of my great-grandfather's *tack*, as the lease was called; a profitable bargain both for him and his son, the rent per acre being but a few

shillings, and that arrangement extending over a hundred years, during which the value of produce doubled or trebled in consequence of the improved state of the country, and the enormously high prices obtained for grain during our long wars with the First Napoleon.

Thus, affluent, rather than straitened, in his circumstances, my grandfather found it easy to provide for a family of seven sons and two daughters. Mild and gentle in his disposition, temperate in his habits, enjoying "the fruit of righteousness which is peace," and inheriting a good natural constitution, my grandfather, as might in such circumstances have been expected, reached a patriarchal age. He lived to be eighty-seven years old; my grandmother and he—as I never knew any other couple who did—living together as man and wife for sixty-six years. He adhered through life to the costume of his early days, wearing knee-breeches, a broad-tailed coat with large metal buttons, and a broad blue bonnet. I remember his appearance well—his air not rustic, but dignified; his form tall and spare, but, as if it carried easily the burden of nearly ninety years, straight as a lance; a few snowy locks falling on his broad shoulders; and his constant attendants, two red-haired terriers, tottering and half-blind with age, which went by the euphonious names of "Meg" and "Sawney." Nothing in my thoughtless boyhood ever impressed me so much as the reverence with which he approached God, even in saying a grace at meals. What a contrast his devout manner to the brief, hurried, mumbling "For what we

are to receive, Lord, make us thankful," or some such curt expression, I have so often heard at the table in England, and from the lips even of her clergy! When all had taken their seats, and were waiting in solemn silence, he slowly uncovered his hoary locks of the cap he wore in the house; and, slightly throwing back his head, with his open eyes raised to heaven, he implored a blessing on the meal—his voice and uplifted eyes tremulous with age, and his countenance wearing an expression of profound devotion.

His wife, my grandmother, was no ordinary woman; a determined "wife" was she; *prononcée,* as the French say—such as I have met with nowhere else in life; and, saying what in her conscience she thought right, neither husband, son, nor daughter—in such respect and awe did they hold her—dared to gainsay it. Bowed and almost blind from the time I remember, she walked leaning on a staff, with which the dogs considered themselves too well acquainted. They stood in awe of her, as did we children also. Nor much wonder; for one part of her creed was that children were too much indulged. So, when she washed our faces, it was to rub them dry with a heavy hand and the hardest towel; and when, on one occasion, we asked for mustard at dinner, it was to meet a stern refusal, and get a rebuke sharper than mustard, for children presuming to think of such a luxury. From her we never got so much as a penny; but many a shilling from my grandfather, though never till we were outside the house and out of sight of the old

lady. With her tongue, though far from a railer or backbiter, or scandal-monger (for she would have scorned to say behind any one's back what she would not have said to their face), she spared neither kith nor kin, telling the truth—sometimes more plain than pleasant—about them all.

What others lacked, her decision of character supplied. Her eldest son, for instance, had fallen in love with a farmer's daughter; but, being a bashful youth, could not pluck up courage enough to ask her. The state of the case being laid before my grandmother, she orders her sheepish lad to saddle a horse. Mounting behind him on a pillion, with her arm round his waist—the old fashion in which I have seen farmers and their wives or daughters enter Brechin on a market day—she directs him to ride straight to the house of his sweetheart; and on arriving there, before he, the lout, has got the horse well stabled, she has done the work of a plenipotentiary, and got the affair all settled with the lass and her parents. But, though my venerable ancestress could not be said by gentleness and amiability to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour—a thing desirable in all, but especially beautiful in woman,—she was, notwithstanding, a woman of genuine though rather stern piety. For many long years down to her death, she fasted one whole day each week, spending most of the time in prayer and secret devotions. That she might not be disturbed, nor have the sights and sounds of the household interrupt her communion with God, she

was accustomed to retire to some of the out-houses of the farm; and I remember of being told by one of my parishioners in Arbirlot, who had been a servant lassie at Knowhead, in Menmuir, my grandfather's farm, that many was the coin she got from him, all unknown to her mistress—who certainly would not have approved of such extravagance—for watching by the door of the house where she was fasting and praying, so that none might interrupt her. This singular and severe exercise of religion, dating from the death of an infant she lost, was supposed to be somehow or other connected with that event. But nobody really knew. The mystery lies buried in her grave, for such was the reverence and awe in which she was held by her children, that none of them, not even my father, her own and her husband's favourite son, ever ventured to pry into her secret. This, however, is pretty plain—that to this remarkable woman, we Guthries largely owe the decision of character and determination of purpose, of which, unless other people are mistaken, we have a more than ordinary share; a valuable inheritance certainly, especially when controlled and guided by the grace of God.

My mother's parents were both dead before I was born. Her father, the son of a farmer, was a baker, and, for many years, a magistrate, in the town of Brechin. Both he and his wife were eminent for piety, bringing up their children in the fear of God and, as I have heard my mother tell, the very strict observance of the Sabbath. They were much esteemed by the ministers of the town;

and here, as interesting illustrations of old times, I may relate two anecdotes told of one of these ministers, a Mr. Blair:—

Mather, one of the foremost preachers of John Wesley's staff, was a native of Brechin. Having been induced, when a mere youth, to join the army of Prince Charlie, he had fled to England to hide himself and escape the fate of other rebels after the Jacobite cause was wrecked on Culloden Moor. Long years afterwards, he returned to Brechin to recruit his shattered health. During his sojourn there, the communion was to be dispensed in the parish church. He desired to join with God's people in observing that ordinance; but fearing that his being a Methodist and an Arminian might be a bar in his way, he sent a message to Mr. Blair, saying, that he would be happy to be admitted by him to the Lord's Table, if the people of Brechin would not object; whereupon Blair, though himself a stanch Calvinist and Presbyterian, rising above all petty and sectarian feelings, returned for answer, that he would admit and welcome him as a brother in Christ, though the whole town should object.

The courage that, conjoined with a truly Christian and Catholic spirit, spoke there, Blair displayed on a still more trying and public occasion. While preaching one day, two Highland officers, followed by a band of rebels with claymores and kilts, entered the church to the consternation of the people. Mounting the pulpit stairs, each laid a pistol on the cushion, and ordered Blair to

stop, threatening to shoot him dead if he didn't. He heard them as if he heard them not, and preached on. The Provost of the town, who was his brother-in-law, observing this, and trembling for his life, rose from his chair in the opposite gallery, and ordered him to stop. The authority of the lawful magistrate Blair acknowledged; but not on that occasion, as he deemed it an unlawful interference with his spiritual office. Laying an arm on each side of the Bible, he pushed the pistols contemptuously over on to the floor; and said, as they crashed on the pavement, but fortunately without going off, "No, sir; I will not stop though the devil and all his angels were here!" Admiring his pluck, or perhaps taking him for a madman, the officers picked up their pistols, and, put *hors de combat* by this brave minister and stanch supporter of the House of Hanover, took themselves off. It is recorded on Blair's monument in the Church of Brechin, that to him belongs the honour of instituting Sabbath Schools; he having commenced one in my native town several years before any were opened in England by Raikes of Gloucester, to whom the honour is generally assigned.

So much for my more remote *forebears*:—who will not appear again on the stage, and on whose histories and character, as affording glimpses of long bygone times, I have dwelt at some length. My father and mother will appear often in the following narrative in their own admirable characters, and as fully deserving the respect in which they were held by the circle in which they

moved, and the esteem, love, and filial reverence with which all their children regarded them.

My father went to Montrose, to become apprentice to a grocer and merchant there; and it may be mentioned, as showing the habits of the times and the hardships young men had to go through, that to these he attributed the dyspepsia under which he suffered all his days. The apprentices had porridge of oatmeal for breakfast; and pity it is that a food, the best, according to Liebig and—a greater than any chemist—experience, for making bone and muscle, has fallen so much, and in so many families, out of use. But (as in those days agriculture was much behind what it is now in respect of those green crops that furnish cows with food) milk for the winter months was a scarce commodity. Its place at the porridge-breakfast was taken by beer, often so sour that chalk was used to correct its acidity; and it was to the injury this inflicted on the digestive organs that my father attributed his delicacy. Let our young people now-a-days be thankful, thinking of the difference between oatmeal porridge—probably ill-boiled, with only sour ale for *sap*—and their luxurious breakfasts—tea from China, coffee from Ceylon, sugar from Jamaica, and bread baked of "the finest of the wheat," from the banks of the Danube, or the plains of California.

My father began business in Brechin, and was long the leading merchant, as well as for some years the Provost or Chief Magistrate of the town. He married early in life, in that setting a good example. Early

marriages, apart altogether from their moral influences, usually prove, in other professions as well as that of the law, the truth of Lord Eldon's observation—that the way for a man to get on at the bar is to start by marrying a woman who has no fortune—who brings him no other fortune but herself. Engaged in many departments of business—a banker, grocer, seed-merchant, shipowner—occasionally speculating in corn, oil, manufactured goods, and stocks—and conducting all his affairs with skill and success, my father was able to educate and provide for a family of thirteen; the blessing of God resting on a house where parents and children met morning and evening at the family altar, and no departure from the strictest habits of virtue and religion would have been tolerated for an hour.

The sabbath was very strictly observed in my father's house; no fun, or levity, or week-day amusements were allowed: and we would indeed almost as soon have thought of profane swearing as of whistling on the Lord's day.

We were trained much after the views (though the story presents these in an exaggerated form) expressed in the rebuke an old woman administered to the late Duke of Argyll. His Grace, then Lord John Campbell, had come to Edinburgh in command of a corps of Fencibles, about the time the first Napoleon threatened to invade our island. He was an accomplished whistler, and had the habit, when absorbed in thought, of whistling some favourite tune. Quite unconscious of

it, he was so engaged as he lay over the window of an hotel in Princes Street, one Sunday morning before church-time. He was suddenly roused from his reverie by the sharp tones of a person on the pavement below, and there stood an old woman with her Bible in one hand, shaking the other at him, and giving expression to her indignation in these words, "Eh! ye *reprobāt!* ye *reprobāt!*"

The reverence with which the people in those days regarded the Sabbath was no way akin to that blind superstition which, in Roman Catholic and semi-popish churches, invests with as much, or more, sacredness the institutions of the Church as the ordinances of God. Though fast-days were generally observed much as a Sabbath, we, by indulging in one short whistle on them, used to mark our sense of the difference between the two; and this, long years afterwards, was brought to my recollection on seeing how in France, and Belgium, and Italy, their *fête* and saints' days were more strictly kept than the Lord's—how places of public amusement were shut, for instance, on Good Friday, but thrown open, as if it were the less sacred day, on the Sabbath.

In these old Scotch manners there might be, and indeed was, a strictness which gave an air of severity to the observance of Sunday, but in the duties we owe either to God or man, it is ever better to lean to the side of scrupulousness than laxity: and I may remark here, that Scotland and her children owe much to the manner in which they were taught to remember the Sabbath day

and keep it holy. All this preaching, and catechising, and reading, whereby the people acquired a remarkable familiarity with the grand truths of the divine word, and even the profounder questions of theology, contributed much, I believe, to their thoughtful and intellectual cast of mind, and to their national and proverbial "hard-headedness," as it has been called; and, though this strict Sabbath observance was not, and could not be very agreeable to the volatile temperament of the young, it was the means of training them to those habits of patient endurance, obedience, and self-denial, to which, as much as to their good school education, Scotsmen owed their success when they went forth, in rivalry with the natives of England and Ireland, to push their fortunes in the world.

The current stories which are told in profane ridicule of our Scottish Sabbaths—such as that of a woman who parted with a valuable hen because it persisted in laying an egg on the Sabbath day—are all rubbish. Our pious ancestors might be too scrupulous; but, whatever they were, they were not fools.

I don't say that they did not fall into even glaring inconsistencies. For example:—on first going to Ross-shire to visit and preach for my excellent friend Mr. Carment of Rosskeen, I asked him on the Saturday evening before retiring to rest, whether I would get warm water in the morning? Whereupon he held up a warning hand, saying, "Whisht, whisht!" On my looking and expressing astonishment, he said, with a

twinkle in his eye, "Speak of shaving on the Lord's day in Ross-shire, and you need never preach here more!" In that same county Sir Kenneth Mackenzie directed my attention to a servant girl, who, if not less scrupulous, was more logical in her practice. She astonished her master, one of Sir Kenneth's tenants, by refusing to feed the cows on the Sabbath. She was ready to milk, but would by no means feed them—and her defence shows that though a fanatic, she was not a fool. "The cows," she said—drawing a nice metaphysical distinction between what are not and what are works of necessity and mercy that would have done honour to a Casuist—"The cows canna' milk themselves, so to milk them is a clear work of necessity and mercy; but, let them out to the fields, and they'll feed themselves." Here certainly was *scrupulosity;* but the error was one that leaned to the right side.

Unfortunately for the interests of true religion, and for the virtues and pith of the people, their leanings nowadays are all the other way. And this, especially so far as the young are concerned, is without excuse. In my early days, besides the historical parts of Scripture —with all the stirring incidents, and marvellous miracles, and bloody battles of which, as related in Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel, I became, for lack of other stirring and comprehensible reading, quite familiar—almost the only book we possessed interesting to young minds was the "Pilgrim's Progress." For the possession of this, an old copy, illustrated by rough and

grotesque woodprints of Christian with his staff, and Giant Despair with his bludgeon, and Mr. Greatheart with his sword, my next brother and I had a contention every Sabbath. If the Lord's day was a weariness to us, as it undoubtedly was, the blame lay not with it, but with those who did not provide reading and discourses suited to the young. With the variety, and piquancy, and attractiveness of books nowadays provided for Sabbath use, there is no excuse for people, whether old or young, seeking relaxation in museums, or public gardens, or Sunday excursions, or saying that the Sabbath is a weariness, and wishing it were over.

As to the plea set up for Sabbath walks and excursions for the sake of health by the working classes, there is no truth in it. If women would spend less on finery, and men on whisky and tobacco, they could spare an hour or two every day for more than all the relaxation which health requires. Besides, I feel certain that statistics, which have no bias to either side, would show that the good old Scottish way of hallowing the Lord's day is most favourable to morals, and health, and length of days—that Sabbath keepers have happier houses and longer lives than Sabbath breakers—and that in this, as in other things, "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

INCHGRUNDLE, LOCHLEE: *June*, 1871.

The youngest but one of my father's family, I was born on the 12th of July, 1803. I am now sixty-seven years

of age; and I humbly and gratefully hope that it has been to do some good in the world—as it has been to enjoy unusual and unnumbered blessings—that I have been spared through two very dangerous illnesses, and two or three very perilous accidents, thus to reach the borders of three score and ten.

Of the first of these illnesses I have no recollection; it occurred when I was an infant; but I have been told that I was then brought back, very unexpectedly, from the very gates of death.

The second illness (to which I shall refer further on) occurred when I was minister of Arbirlot, in 1837, the year of my translation from that country parish to be a collegiate minister of the Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh.

As to my escapes from death by accident, the first happened in boyhood, when wading across a swollen river with another boy on my back. Getting dizzy and falling off, he lost his presence of mind; and striking out with hands and feet bellowed like a madman as he lay floating, fast in my grip, on the top of the flood. It was with the utmost difficulty I succeeded in reaching the shore; and still remember how glad and thankful I was, even at that thoughtless age, that I had brought him as well as myself safe to land—an incident this, that sometimes rises to my recollection when people quote the proverb, "Providence is kind to fools and bairns."

Another merciful interposition of God's hand occurred during my ministry at Arbirlot. I had gone to the rocks on the east side of Arbroath that culminate in the

noble promontory of the "Red Head," on a day when the waves were, so to speak, "running mountains high." Though the tide was making, a considerable breadth of the rocks that shelved at a sharp angle into the sea lay bare. I leaped down on one, and had no sooner lighted on the slippery weeds that covered it than my feet went out from below me, and, laid flat on my back, with my face to the sky and my feet to the sea, I was off, like a ship at her launch! Instantly taking in all the danger, I gave myself up for lost. I could swim, but in such a sea I would have been dashed to pieces against the rocks. By God's good providence the very extremity of the danger had the effect not of confusing but of calming my mind. I remembered that the rocks there, formed of what is called "plum-pudding stone," had often nodules that, consisting of harder matter, had resisted the action of the waves and rose above their polished surface. I remembered also how, but the very day before, I had got the heels of my boots armed with iron, and it came on me like a flash of lightning that, if I pressed firmly against the rock in my descent, I might peradventure catch a projecting nodule, and be saved—brought to a stand-still by that. This flashed on my mind like an inspiration; and, through the Divine blessing, by this device I was plucked from the jaws of death—saved, where nothing else short of a miracle could have saved me.

There are few who have not experienced, some time or other, providential deliverances equally remarkable.

It were well we saw God's hand in them, and made such use of them as did Lord Clive when he twice attempted and twice failed to blow out his brains. The founder of our great Eastern Empire, he landed in India a wild, reckless youth, with a purse emptied and a character lost by dissipation. Weary of a life which was a disgrace to his friends and a burden to himself, he loaded a pistol, and putting the muzzle to his head, drew the trigger; snap it went, but only to flash the powder in the pan. Bent on suicide, he renewed the priming, and, strange to say, again the powder flashed in the pan. Renewing the priming once more, a third time he put his finger on the trigger and the muzzle to his brow, and was about to draw, when, struck all of a moment by his remarkable escapes, he laid the pistol down, saying, godless and graceless man as he was—"Surely God intends to do some great things by me that He has so preserved me!"

With my brother Charles, who was only two and twenty months older than myself, I was sent, when four years old, to what might be called an infant school; "infant schools," properly so called, were not known in these days. My father had a large business to manage, and my mother a large family to look after; and I fancy we were sent there to be out of the way, and also probably because the fees offered an opportunity of contributing in a delicate way to the comfort of a humble but high-minded and eminently Christian man.

Jamie Stewart, our pedagogue, was by trade a weaver;

a very little man, dressed in the old fashion, his broad, blue bonnet covering a head of great size, and full of brains. Of him it might have been said, as a Highland porter, observing a stranger looking intently on Dr. Candlish, said, "Ay, tak' a gude look, there's no' muckle o' him—but there's a deal *in* him!" Stewart was an elder in the Burgher* Church, where, for lack of accommodation in the Established Church, we went, when children, with my mother, and eldest brother and sister, who had become Seceders. Though then a thoughtless boy, I remember how impressed I was with the prayers this old man offered up at meetings of the congregation. I have never heard anything like them since. With a remarkable knowledge of his Bible, and perfect mastery of its language, he so interwove its sublimest passages into his prayers, that they seemed like the utterance of a seraph before the Throne.

Remarkable for his piety, he was no ascetic, no sour and unhealthy Christian; but enjoyed, and encouraged others to enjoy, innocent recreations. He was very fond of fishing, and was off to the waterside with rod and reel whenever he could escape from his loom. Nor did he think it below the dignity and gravity of a Seceder elder to "harry" crows' nests; on one occasion astonishing a brother in office, as they came near a rookery, by suddenly dropping the thread of a pious conversation, to rush at

* The Secession Church, whose origin dates from 1733, when Ebenezer Erskine left the Establishment, split on the question of the lawfulness of taking the religious clause of the Burgess oath—the affirmative party being styled "Burghers," the negative, "Anti-burghers."

a tree and mount it like a squirrel! The single room of this good old man, where he lived with his wife and daughter—the loom standing in one corner and their box-beds in another—was our school. There were some half-dozen of us who sat on stools, conning our lessons to the click of his shuttle, while he sat weaving, gently reminding us from time to time of our tasks, by the use of a leather thong at the end of a long stick, with which he reached us without having to leave his throne.

Having learned our letters, and some small syllables printed on a fly-sheet of the Shorter Catechism, we were at once passed into the Book of Proverbs. In the olden time this was the universal custom in all the common schools in Scotland, a custom that should never have been abandoned. That book is without a rival for beginners, containing quite a repertory of monosyllables and pure Saxon—"English undefiled." Take this passage, for example, where, with one exception, every word is formed of a single syllable, and belongs to the Saxon tongue,—"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." What a contrast to the silly trash of modern schoolbooks for beginners, with such sentences as, "Tom has a dog;" "The Cat is good;" "The Cow has a calf!"

While learning the art of reading by the Book of Proverbs, we had our minds stored with the highest moral truths; and, by sage advices applicable to all the ages and departments of life, the branch, while it was supple, received a bent in a direction highly favourable to future

well-doing and success in life. The patience, prudence, foresight and economy which used to characterise Scotchmen—giving occasion to the saying, "a canny Scot"—and by which they were so often able to rise in the world and distance all competitors in the race of life, was to a large extent due to their being thus engrained in youth and childhood with the practical wisdom enshrined in the Book of Proverbs.

The mode of pronunciation we were taught was very primitive—no danger of its being said of us as it was said of Lord Jeffrey, that at Oxford he lost his Scotch, and did not catch the English. Ours was the broadest Doric. "Abraham" we learned to pronounce *Aubrawhawm*—"Capernaum," *Caa-pernauum*—"throughout all the land of Israel," *throch-oout aul the laund of Israul;* and if all this had to be whipped out of us at our next school, it was but a small price we had to pay for the good instruction we received from that venerable man, and the good we may have got in answer to his prayers, the effectual fervent prayers of a righteous man which avail much.

Our next school was one belonging to the Antiburgher Congregation—the property being theirs, and the teacher always one belonging to their body, selected by them. It was this school which the celebrated Dr. McCrie, the biographer of John Knox, came to Brechin to teach, when a student but fourteen or fifteen years old. I have heard the old people in Brechin speak of him as being even then a great politician, taking the liveliest interest in public affairs; and they told the following anecdote of

him, which shows the budding of that ambition which, guided by rare sagacity and sanctified by grace and associated with patriotism and the love of liberty, won him his high place in literature and religion :—

But first I must explain that the body to which Dr. McCrie belonged, called Seceders, were, while remarkably moral and pious—in many places the cream of religious society—rather narrow-minded and exclusive. Old, sturdy, true-blue, double-dyed Presbyterians, they held stoutly by their own views of duty as well as doctrine. Though not averse to amusements *per se*, in some they would take no share. For instance, thinking it unfavourable to good morals, they disapproved of *promiscuous dancing*—dances where men and women took part together. Not that they condemned dancing, but it must be (to borrow a term from prisons) on the "separate system," the men with men, the women with women! Time somewhat modified these views. A worthy old Original-Seceder Elder, a retainer of our family, danced at my wedding; and John Mill, the said dancer, was as good and guileless a Christian as I ever knew. He used to retire for prayer early every morning to a cellar below the room which was my study; and, as I was wont to rise early to work at my books, and he had the habit, as many old people of that age had, of praying aloud, though I could not catch the words, I used to be solemnised by hearing his earnest pleading tones, while, with all asleep around us, he would remain half-an-hour on his knees in prayer. These Seceders disapproved of all games of chance—regarding these as a

profane use of the *lot;* which, as the means by which the Jews appealed to God for a decision, they considered should only be employed on solemn occasions and for sacred purposes. Thus, abjuring cards and every game where dice were thrown, they confined themselves to games of pure skill, such as chess and draughts.

Now, young McCrie on going to Brechin found in Mr. Gray, the minister of the Anti-burgher congregation, a most expert draught-player with whom he had not a chance. Yet he was determined to beat the minister. So having heard of a shoemaker in an obscure part of the town who was a celebrated player, he ferreted him out; and finding how much he earned by each hour of his trade, he agreed to pay him the value of the time he would spend in teaching him the secrets of his skill in draughts —and this, when his fees as a teacher were hardly enough to clothe his back and fill his belly. Keeping the secret to himself, he becomes master in time of the shoemaker's tactics, sits down on a Saturday afternoon with the minister, who expected his usual triumph, and leaves the old gentleman staring in amazement and mortification at the boy who has plucked the laurels from his grey hairs, and swept him clean off the board.

To the school which was associated with the name of the great Dr. McCrie, Charlie and I were transferred, to be under the charge of a teacher who must also have been a very young man, else that had not happened which gave occasion to the first regular whipping I ever got from my father. There, led off by others, I, being then about

seven years old, with my brother for the first and last time played truant. Anticipating punishment, we resolved when the first was called out by our teacher, that the rest should rise *en masse* and show fight. My brother Charlie is the first called out. It is the signal for a general rising. To the astonishment of the school a dozen of us leave our seats, and with closed fists march up in line to the amazed and alarmed *dominie*, giving him his choice between forgiving or fighting us. This *coup d'état* was a success: and we returned to our seats, every boy a hero. But Charlie and I paid sweetly for our laurels. The poor *dominie* who showed the white feather, made us white enough at the supper-table in our house when, on the evening thereafter, he had the meanness to tell of this *émeute* to my father: Charlie and I being present. My father said nothing at the time; but we paid for it next day.

Speaking of punishment, I may describe the singularly wise and effective way in which—with much pain I am sure to himself—he performed that part of parental duty. Few parents ever made less use of the rod, in the common sense of the term, yet none ever ruled more absolutely. He was far from being stern; yet a word, a look was law, not only to be obeyed, but that promptly, instantly, without an attempt at remonstrance on our part, or any reason given on his. And that saved him a great deal of trouble and us a great deal of pain; the pain of tears, entreaties, and mortified expectations and unsuccessful pleadings. We never attempted to get a disagreeable

order cancelled, to get our own way: and so never suffered the disappointment of failing. We would not even have dreamt of attempting anything of the kind. On the rare occasions—not above three or four, and which, with the above exception, all arose from my love of fighting—when I was punished by my father, he went very deliberately to work. At whatever time the offence was committed or the complaint made, there was a fixed hour for the payment of the penalty, and when we knew in the morning that a whipping awaited us, I remember in what misery the day was passed. The delay hung like a black cloud over the whole intervening time, and made the thing doubly terrible. I see my father yet, as, with more than ordinary dignity and a measure of solemnity, he rose from the table after tea to go to the next room, we knew well for what purpose. How the key grated in our ears as we heard it turning in the lock of the desk where he kept the strap! And the thing though firmly done, was done so calmly, deliberately, without a trace of passion, or any appearance of it being other than a pain to him, that I would twenty times rather have had my lips cut, my nose bled, and an eye closed up in fight, than have gone through the mental horrors of this whipping.

Ready in a year or two to enter on the higher branches of knowledge, we were transferred to a school that combined the advantages of private and public education.

Besides this school there were two others in Brechin where Latin and Greek, French, and mathematics were taught. One of these was endowed from property be-

longing in Roman Catholic times to the Knights Templars, who had a preceptory there. The other was the parish school. Both were conducted by "preachers," or licentiates of the Church of Scotland,—university men who had spent at least eight years at college. Both prepared young men for the university, teaching them, besides the more common branches of education, Algebra, Euclid, French, Latin and Greek, and all for five shillings a quarter! That may astonish people now-a-days. But so it was: and the bursaries which a large proportion of their pupils won by open competition at the Universities of St. Andrews and Aberdeen, while the means of their support there, proved the goodness of the teaching they got for this small sum. The result of this cheap and efficient education was that the sons of many poor and humble people pulled their way up to honourable positions in life, and that Brechin had many of its children in the ministry at home and in important offices abroad, while the parents had not their self-respect and feelings of independence lowered by owing the superior education of their children to others than themselves.

The school to which my brother and I were now sent was instituted by a few of the better conditioned families in the town. The teacher had gone through the curriculum of the Edinburgh University, and was thoroughly qualified to prepare his pupils for college. He received a fixed salary, and the number of scholars, which included girls as well as boys, was limited. The cost was greater than if we had attended a common school; but that was

made up by its combining the care of a private with the spur of a public education.

In those days, what Solomon says of the rod was literally understood; and our teacher, though then a licentiate, and afterwards a minister of the Church of Scotland, had not learned to govern his passions. An able and accomplished, and at bottom a kind-hearted man, he broke out into terrible explosions of temper. Not that I suffered much; but I have ground my teeth and held by the bench to prevent myself rising in open revolt as I saw him unmercifully beating some naturally stupid but amiable boy, who was filling the school with his screams.

I recollect of getting one *licking* from him—no more; but it has left its marks on my memory, as it did for days on my body. We were reading Ovid's account of Phæton's attempt to drive the chariot of the sun, and my teacher's attempt that day to drive me was also like to end in a catastrophe. Before we had time to master our lesson, he calls out, as I was that day dux, "Tom Guthrie's class." "Not ready, sir!" was—no unusual thing, and usually securing another half-hour to us—my ready reply. Something had put him into a savage humour. So, without more ado, he discharged it on me, springing from his seat to haul me from mine, and say, with fury in his face, as he struck the table with clenched hand—"I'll *make* you ready!" Well, no doubt, like the reeds by a loch side, I should have bowed my head to the storm, whereby I would have come off little the worse. But my blood got up, and I refused to

read one word. Blows had no more effect on me than on an iron pillar. My class-fellows stood trembling. The attention of the school was wholly turned on the struggle. Transported with rage at the prospect of being baffled by a boy, he dropped the strap for a ruler, and beat me black and blue with it on the head. He might have broken my skull: he could not break my resolution, and at length gave it up. If I was wrong, he was much more to blame; since, instead of beating me so savagely, he should have turned me, for my insubordination, out of the school. Seeing me return next day with a brow and face all marred and swollen, he regretted, I believe, his violence, and was very gracious. I had no choice but to return. My parents were wiser than my teacher, my mother telling me, when I said I would not return but tell my father how I had been used, "You had better not; he will lick you next!" We were brought up hardier *louns* than the present generation, and did not get on any the worse in life for that.

A sister of my mother's, Miss Betty Cay, lived and died in my father's house. She was somewhat deformed, but had a beautiful and most expressive face. She wore a silken plaid overhead when out-of-doors, a hoop or something like it, and high-heeled shoes; and, though she took her meals with the family, spent most of her time in her own room, sitting at a small round table with a large folio volume before her of Boston's "Fourfold State," or Ambrose's "Looking to Jesus," or some other such pious folio. It was her practice on New Year's

Day to call Charlie and me into her room, give us some kind and pious counsels, and with these a sixpence and a kiss. The counsels, I fear, we did not mind much; the kiss we disliked; and though we valued the sixpence, our estimation of it was much abated by her instantly resuming it to place it at our credit in the Savings-bank. Well, as agreed on, we obeyed the summons on a New Year's Day to "Auntie Betty's" room, got our sixpence and our kiss to boot, and, having left the door open, before she could ask or get it back, to her great astonishment we bolted off, each with his prize in hand: and the most creditable story I have to tell of my early days is, that, though some of it may have come our own way, most of the money was spent in buying oranges for our old teacher's old wife; from which I infer, though I remember little about her, that she must have been kind to bairns. I have no recollection of being whipt for this escapade, which, though it astonished Auntie in the first instance, was, very probably, secretly approved of. I think very likely it was my brother Charles who suggested the thing—for, while of a rollicking disposition, he was very kind-hearted.

As I may not have occasion to speak of my brother and schoolfellow again, I may mention that he afterwards became a captain in the Indian army, and died on the banks of the Ganges in consequence of injuries suffered years before in the first Burmese war; leaving a widow, who, with her daughter was among the massacred at Cawnpore.

While I aspired to keep the top of my class, my greatest ambition was to win honours in another field,—to be the best fighter among boys of my standing. I undertook to fight any boy of my size and age with my left hand tied behind my back, and repeatedly fought boys older and bigger than myself. Though I cannot say this gendered much ill-will, and did more damage to the eyes and nose than to the temper, it was not a commendable ambition; and now I never see boys in the street fighting, or threatening a fight, but I interpose.

This combative spirit, which brought me into the ring in my second as well as my first session at college (and, what I dreaded more, into the hands of the college officer, who threatened to take me before the Senatus Academicus and have me expelled) was nursed if not created, by the great war between our country and the armies of Napoleon, which occupied the attention of old and young in my early days. Our greatest and choicest sport was playing at soldiers. People now-a-days have no idea of the warlike and patriotic spirit which then animated all classes. Many a time did we boys tramp a mile or two out of town to meet troops marching to the war; and proud we were to be allowed to carry a soldier's musket, which the poor fellows, burdened with all the heavy accoutrements of those days, and wearied with a twelve hours' march in a hot summer's day, were glad enough to resign to us. Animated by this martial spirit, school was sometimes pitched against school,—sometimes the upper part of the town against the lower. And it

was not always play-stones which we showered at each other; the wonder is that some of us were not killed in these *mêlées*. We had our "deadly breaches;" and I remember of having to charge up a narrow close, down which "the French," as we nicknamed the opposite party, were sending volleys of stones, and suffering nothing in that "deadly breach" beyond a *thud* on the hip from a large piece of slate, which lamed me for a day or two.

I have a distinct recollection of many things that occurred about, or at the close of that great war. In those days, the only London daily newspaper that came to the town came to my father, and I have seen the shop-fellows and a crowd outside the door listening to one of my brothers, as, standing on a chair, he read the stirring news of battles by flood or field.

I remember one morning, when we were at Wormy-hills—a place on the shore of what afterwards became my parish—for sea-bathing, of an alarm which brought all out of bed, that the French were off the coast. Out we rushed, to see, as it turned out, a sight of unusual magnificence and splendour. Many hundred vessels with every sail set, and many men-of-war for convoys, were forming a long and most imposing line, slowly making their way northward over a glassy sea and in a bright morning, but a mile or two from shore. The sight did not look less beautiful when we found the alarm false—that it was not a French invasion, but the West India fleet making under convoy for the Atlantic, north by the Pentland Firth.

I saw Bonaparte borne in effigy through the streets of Brechin, and then consigned to a tar-barrel in the Market-place, in presence of the magistrates and principal citizens, who had met at the Cross to celebrate the peace of 1814, and drink the King's health. I remember of us boys, with flags flying and drums beating, marching up in military style to the houses of two *black-nebs*, as the partisans of the French were called, and compelling them, by a threat of carrying their citadels by storm, to hang out a white sheet as the *drapeau blanc* of the Bourbons.

The news of Waterloo made each of us as proud as if he had been a hero in that field. It spread like wildfire from town to hamlet, from hamlet to cottage, and was celebrated in Brechin by an illumination, which, though only formed by a piece of candle stuck behind each pane of glass, astonished and pleased me more perhaps than the splendours of Paris at the baptism of the Prince Imperial, or the still more splendid spectacle of the illumination of Edinburgh on the night of the marriage of the Prince of Wales.

Part II.

COLLEGE LIFE IN EDINBURGH.

1815—1824.

In the spring of 1815, our teacher having left Brechin, I was sent, previous to going to college at the end of autumn, to pass the summer in the country with the Rev. Robert Simpson (afterwards Dr. Simpson of Kintore), the parish schoolmaster of Dun; and I may use his case to illustrate one and not a rare phase of the old parish school system of Scotland.

Though the emoluments were small, and almost all the scholars were the children of peasants, ploughmen, and artisans, who aimed at nothing beyond "the three R's"—as reading, writing, and arithmetic have been called—the teachers were in many instances university men who had gone or were going through a full curriculum of the arts and sciences. Many had won their spurs, the degree of M.A., at one of the Universities —St. Andrew's, Aberdeen, Glasgow, or Edinburgh— and not a few were licentiates of the Church. By help of the salary and fees accruing to a parish school teacher, many a poor lad was able to work his way through the expenses of a university, all the more if he had obtained

a bursary there. He taught the school during the summer, and filled it with a substitute during the five months which he passed at college. And if, aiming at the pulpit, he had finished his literary and philosophical curriculum, and had become a student in divinity, it was a still easier matter to hold a parish school. The Church of Scotland, wisely accommodating her rules to circumstances, required only one full attendance of five months at her Divinity Halls, if the student, instead of four sessions of that length, attended six or seven partial ones.

The disadvantages of this system were, so far at any rate as the general education of the country was concerned, more than counterbalanced by its advantages. As a licentiate of the Church, or one preparing for that position and for the office of the ministry, the teacher in such cases had a high character to maintain, and was thereby preserved from those temptations to fall into low, vulgar, and dissipated habits he might otherwise have been exposed to. In him, besides the clergyman, the rudest country parishes had a man of literary accomplishments and cultured manners, and the clergyman a companion of education equal to his own. But more than all that, in such a man the humblest country school had a teacher of Greek, Latin, and mathematics, in whom the son of the poorest peasant, at the most trifling cost to his parents, found one who could prepare him to enter a university. Thus ploughmen's sons were put on a level with those of peers. A "liberal education," as it

is called, was brought to the door of the humblest cottage; and if a shoeless *loun* had talents and ambition, here was a ladder by which he could, and by which many such did, climb to positions in society far above that of their birth.

New schemes of education have altered all this; but not in all respects to the advantage of the country, which was very much thereby able to boast of having, in proportion to her population, three times as many more than England, and nearly five times as many more than Ireland had, of her sons who had received a university education. Some years ago these were the proportions: in Scotland, one out of every 5,000; in England, one out of every 16,000; and in Ireland, but one out of every 22,000 of the people.

Take the case of a man I knew well, who was an example, and an admirable one, of these bygone days. His father, an elder of the Church, and a man of excellent character, was by trade a weaver. But, though possessed of some little means—what the Scotch call a "*bein' body*"—he could not well afford to educate a son at college out of his own resources. So my friend began life at the loom. But, a youth of superior talents and early piety, he was fired with a holy ambition to be a minister of the gospel. *Tenax propositi*—the characteristic of our countrymen—he commenced the Latin grammar, and, placing the book before him on his loom, as he plied the shuttle, he studied and finally mastered it.

Such a case was that of my excellent tutor Mr.

Simpson. He had only a year or two at school; but, by dint of determined application, made such advances in study as to venture on competing for a bursary at the University of Aberdeen. He came out first on the list. His foot was now on the ladder, and round after round he manfully climbed, till he found himself Professor of Hebrew in the university of that city, a position he left to become minister of the parish of Kintore: where, after "going out" at the Disruption, receiving the honour of Doctor in Divinity, living and labouring for many years, he died last summer—few in life so much esteemed, few in death so much regretted.

The accommodation provided by law for teachers in those days was very inadequate. Mr. Simpson's house at Dun contained only two rooms besides the school-room. The heritors of Scotland, in most instances, grudged the schoolmaster (though, it might be, more highly cultivated than themselves) anything beyond this, the provision required by law. To them, with honourable exceptions, the country owed little gratitude. They grew rich by the spoils of the Church; starved the teachers, and opposed with dogged determination every reform in Church and State, reminding one of what Dr. Chalmers related as the speech of a professor of St. Andrew's to his students. "Gentlemen," he said, "there are just two things in nature that never change. These are the fixed stars and the Scotch lairds!"

However, with poor accommodation and plain fare compared with what I had been accustomed to at home,

I spent a happy summer preparing for college. No wonder! I was healthy, full of good spirits, and had in Mr. Simpson the kindest of guardians and tutors.

Under Mr. Simpson's charge, in November, 1815, when twelve years of age, I set out for the University of Edinburgh. No steamboats nor railways at that time, nor even stage-coaches always. Lads going to college were sometimes glad of a *cast* on a carrier's cart, and such was our condition between Forfar and Dundee, there being no coach on that road. Spending the night in Dundee, we crossed the Tay next day in a pinnace, and travelled two or three stages through Fife on the top of the coach. My tutor requiring to observe a rigid economy, we made out the last stage of ten miles to Pettycur on foot, intending to spend the night there, and cross the Forth next morning to Edinburgh. Like "*Canny Scots*," however, we thought it well to call for the bill, and, by the charge made for tea, see how we were to get on. Ignorant of the world, we stood aghast at the charge of eighteen pence for each. Having dined in Kirkaldy some hour or two before, we had eaten little, and looked on this charge as an outrageous swindle—I, like a boy (as Mr. Simpson used afterwards to tell with much glee), regretting that I had allowed any of the viands set before us to leave the table unconsumed! We resolved to get out as quickly as possible from what we took to be a "den of thieves," and so, the moment we had paid the bill, made off for the pier to cross the Firth

of Forth by the six o'clock boat, which was an open pinnace. By this time the night had fallen down wet and stormy. We two were the only passengers who appeared, and, as such a small freight promised poor remuneration to the crew, they were unwilling to put out to sea, but at last were compelled by the superintendent to start. When a short way out on the tumbling waves, which, as this was the first day I had ever been at sea, I looked on with considerable fear, my fears changed into terror when, seeing us to be two "greenhorns," the boatmen threatened to pitch us overboard unless we paid them double or treble the proper fare. But a woman whom we were called back to take in came opportunely to our relief, gave them as good as she got, and, snapping her fingers at their threats, with a tongue as loose as theirs, and more mother-wit, answered these fools according to their folly.

The habits of students then were formed on a much less expensive scale than they are now. Our one apartment was bedroom, parlour, and study. For it, with coals, attendance, and cooking, we only paid 5*s.* or 6*s.* a week. We lived in Bristo Street. Our landlady was a highly respectable woman, the widow of a banker's clerk, whose children, wisely and piously trained at home, fought their way up through their straitened circumstances to affluent and highly respectable positions.

With the exception of some "swells," few students had ampler accommodation than ours, and our living was on a par with our lodgings—the usual bill of fare being tea

once, oatmeal porridge twice a day, and for dinner, fresh herring and potatoes I don't think we indulged in butcher's meat more than twice during the whole first session at college; nor that, apart from the expense of fees, books, and what my tutor received, I cost my father more than £10. Though not luxuriously brought up at home, this was too great a change perhaps for a growing boy, who shot up into 6 feet 2½ inches without the shoes by the time he was seventeen years of age. Nevertheless, it is better for boys to be so trained than taught, on the John Bull system, to make a god of their belly. My expenses were higher in the two succeeding sessions when I had different tutors, and lived in better lodgings; but even then, and afterwards when, during the last seven years I spent at the University, I ceased to be under tutors, they were much less than is common nowadays. One winter, six of us had a common table, and we used to make up for the outlay of occasional suppers, by dinners of potatoes and ox livers, which we reckoned cost us only three halfpence a head.

Sydney Smith might joke about Scotchmen cultivating the arts and sciences on oatmeal, but the struggle which many an ambitious lad makes to fight his way on through college, is a feather in the cap of our country.

I knew one poor fellow, who brought up a large box with him to Edinburgh. He never took a meal outside his own room, which was a poor chamber in a mean house, near the scene of the "Burke and Hare" murders; and the landlady told me that he had lodged with her for

three months, nor been served with anything else than hot water. That chest, the inside of which he was too proud to let her see, contained, she had no doubt, oatmeal; and her belief was, that, by the help of a little butter and salt which he had brought with him also, he lived on "brose," as it is called in Scotland—on nothing else than brose, for all these months. Such food was fit only for the strong stomach of a ploughman; whether due to this or not, the poor fellow went mad before the close of the session! I came to know the case by his landlady applying to me to get him, as I did, received into a lunatic asylum.

A more fortunate case was that of a poor lad, who restricted himself for a whole year to two shillings and sixpence a-week, went hungry to his classes and hungry to bed, but fought his way through to become a Doctor in Medicine, and (till death in a distant land suddenly closed his career) occupy as a physician and a Christian, a position of the highest respectability.

A very striking reminiscence of my college life was the entrance of the 42nd Regiment of Highlanders into Edinburgh after the Battle of Waterloo. It must have occurred during the first session I was at college, that is 1815–16. This gallant regiment, who left most of their number behind them, had been fêted all the way north through England; and on the day when they were to enter Edinburgh, the whole town turned out to hail and welcome them. They were to come in by the Water-gate, and march up by the Canon-gate and High Street to the Castle.

The long line of their triumphal march was one densely-packed mass of human beings. Every window was filled up to the topmost storey of these seven and eight-storied houses. Wherever there was sitting or standing-room on the roofs and chimney tops, there daring fellows were clustered. The town was wild with joy; and as the small but gallant remnant of that noble regiment entered with tattered colours, some with their arms in slings, patches still on the naked limbs that trode, and on the brave bronzed faces that looked upon that bloody field, the roll of drums and shrill sound of their bagpipes were drowned in shouts that rent the air. Order was gone; brothers and sisters rushed into the arms of their soldier brothers, as if they had got them back from the grave. Friends shook hands with friends, and one of the pipers, besides being well blackened, was nearly choked in the embraces of a drunken chimney-sweep. Imposing spectacle as it was, to how many had it brought back sad memories of the dead, opening these wounds afresh! War is one of sin's worst curses. May it cease to the ends of the earth, and the world be brought under the benign sceptre of the Prince of Peace!

Yet it was a grand procession; the grandest I ever saw, save that other when, at the close of a better battle, in presence of a crowd as great, nearly five hundred ministers who had laid down their earthly all on the altar of principle, marched, amid prayers and tears and blessings, on the 18th day of May, 1843, to form the Free Church of Scotland, in Canonmills Hall; teaching anew

infidels, sceptics, worldlings, *et hoc genus omne*, the reality of religion and the power of conscience.

Beyond the departments of fun and fighting, I was no way distinguished at college.

The first year, I was twice in the hands of the college porter and policeman, under a threat of being reported to the Senatus Academicus. On one of these occasions I got into trouble in the following circumstances. Some of the students, lads belonging to Edinburgh, who had come to college from its High School, despising my youth and ridiculing my Brechin accent (as if theirs were a whit better), thought they might make game of me. After days of patient endurance, I selected the chief offender as soon as we got out of the Greek class into the college yard; and, though I had not then a friend or acquaintance among them, my class-fellows acted very fairly. So soon as my opponent and I had buttoned our coats, turned up the end of our sleeves, and stood face to face in the middle of the ring, he came up to me squaring in the most scientific fashion. I met him with the Brechin tactics, pouring in a shower of blows, all directed to his face; and, so soon as blood came streaming from nose or mouth, and he held down his head to protect his face, hitting and giving him no time to breathe. The victory only cost me a blue eye and the gentlest of all rebukes from my tutor, who, being himself a native of Brechin, was secretly proud of the boy who had stood up for the honour of the north country and its tongue.

During the second year, I was twice fined by one of the Professors, and put besides on a sort of pillory or "cutty-stool," being made to sit apart from my fellows and beside him, "a spectacle to men."

Not that for these sins of omission and commission I take much blame to myself. I was a mere boy, pushed on too fast at school, and sent to the University much too soon. I had no chance with many lads in my class, who, having been pupils in the celebrated High School of Edinburgh, were much more thoroughly educated, and who were, besides, three or four years older than I.

As to the fun, it was natural at my age; and, so far as it exposed me to be fined and pilloried in the class, it was provoked by my position and professor. We met in a part of the Old College buildings, at eight o'clock in the morning. The room was dark. My seat was one of the highest up and farthest back. The professor, though a learned and at bottom a kind-hearted man, was very *peppery;* and when, without rhyme or reason, he flew into a passion, it was not very wonderful that a boy who had some split peas in his pocket should, led on by older rogues, astonish the worthy man with a shower of them rattling like hailstones on the book he held, and on himself. I have seen him so carried away with passion that he would leave his chair to dance on the floor, or rush to collar, as happened sometimes, an innocent student, and drag him from his seat. The blame was more his than ours. Who cannot govern himself is unfit to govern others—the parent, master, or teacher, who, in

dealing with his children, servants, or pupils, loses his temper, being sure to lose their respect. Another Professor, though sour and sulky, never indulged in outbreaks of passion, and we left the uproar of the class just mentioned to be as quiet as lambs in his. In my second session, besides attending for a second time the Latin and Greek professors, I went to the Logic class. It was conducted by one of the Moderate ministers of the city, and of course a pluralist. It was said he read his predecessor's lectures; but, any way, it was all one to me, who, then but thirteen years old, set down logic to be a farrago of nonsense. In my third year, when I studied Mathematics under Sir John Leslie, and Moral Philosophy under the celebrated Dr. Thomas Brown, I made some progress in these sciences. Mathematics and Natural Philosophy occupied my time and attention in my fourth winter. I was rather fond of these sciences, and made a reputable appearance in both, but nothing more. Nor much wonder: for I had finished my four years' curriculum of Literature and Philosophy before I was sixteen years of age, leaving college at the age most youths nowadays enter it.

This was an evil; and yet, like many other ills in life, the parent of good in some respects. It saved me from self-conceit; no prizes inflated me with vanity, making me, as they have done not a few whom I have known, fancy myself a genius who might rest on his laurels, and dispense with the hard work that alone insures ultimate eminence and success. My extreme youth also rendered

it advisable that, for the first three years at college, I should be in charge of tutors; and as these were grown men attending the divinity classes, whose associates were fellow-students far advanced in their course, I was thrown into the society of such as were in age and acquirements much my superiors. This, next to being able to say with David, "I am the companion of all them that fear thee," is the greatest blessing for men as well as youths. He who associates chiefly with his juniors is almost sure to grow vain, self-sufficient, and intolerant, whilst they in their turn become his sycophants and flatterers. Elsewhere than in tap-rooms, it is a dangerous thing to be "the cock of the walk." To this, and the effect on himself of associating chiefly with men very much his inferiors, I can trace the unfortunate aberrations of a man who ought to have stood high in the public esteem. He is never seen without some of them; they are his tail; composed, like a kite's, of straws and base stuff; but do not, like it, repay the service he renders them in raising them from obscurity by giving steadiness to his course.

In consequence, besides, of entering college at a very early age, I had finished all my course of eight years—four at the literary and philosophical classes, and four as a student of theology—two years before I could be taken on my "trials" for licence as a "probationer" or "preacher." In these two years* I returned to the

* It appears from Mr. Guthrie's class-tickets that the latter of the "two years" was 1825-26, when he was already a preacher.

University, seizing the opportunity of studying subjects beyond the requirements of Church law and the usual course of ministers; such, for example, as chemistry, anatomy, and natural history; thereby enlarging my mind and adding to my stores of knowledge. What I thus gained at the end, perhaps compensated for what, in consequence of my youth, I lost at the beginning of my course. I lost the metaphysics, but gained the physics; and perhaps, so far as common sense, power of conversation, knowledge of the world, and power of popular address on the platform and in the pulpit, were concerned, that was a good bargain.

My parents acted prudently in placing me under the charge of an accomplished, tried, and religious guardian, as well as teacher. Left to the society of any companions they may choose, to become lodgers in houses where no oversight of their habits is taken, and exposed in university towns to temptations they have never before encountered or learned to resist, many promising youths are ruined at college, and more would be so, but that, happily for themselves, they are poor. Every university should have a roll of lodging-houses from which parents could make their selection, and on which no houses should be admitted but such as ministers or citizens of respectability have certified. After I escaped from tutelage, my father was prudent enough to keep me very short of money, and always required me at the close of the session, on my return home, to account for every penny I had received. And for this, which

I may have thought hard at the time, I now bless his memory.

It may not be considered that he acted with the same sound judgment in sending a boy to college at such an early age. But he followed in this matter the advice of my teachers, and a not very uncommon as well as ancient practice. It appears, from the Records of Oxford and Cambridge, as well as those of the Scotch universities, that, not youths only, but boys even of ten years of age, were found at college in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With all our progress in the arts and sciences and boast of improved systems of education, the present generation is not so early initiated into the different branches of education as were the boys and girls of my day. Not that the race has degenerated; but we could read at an age when most children nowadays are ignorant of their letters. My youngest brother, for instance, could read in the New Testament when he was but three years of age, and we were half way through the classics at school before most of the boys of this age have begun them.

This also might enter into the calculation of parents who had sons preparing for the ministry—that the earlier the time when they had finished the eight years at college required by the Church, they could afford to wait the longer for a living. In my early days, and for long years thereafter, the appointment to a parish did not go by merit but by influence; and, by one of the many evils of patronage, there was nothing either to be lost or

gained by the candidate being but a raw youth. How often did it come across me, excusing and encouraging idle fits, that my "getting a living," as it is called, would not turn on my diligence, and that, through the influence my father had with those who were patrons of churches, I was sure of an appointment!

This system, so far as students were concerned, had but one redeeming feature. Through it, boorish cubs were licked into shape, and vulgarly-bred lads acquired the manners of gentlemen; for most of those who had the ministry in view could obtain the favour of a patron in no other way than by becoming tutors in gentlemen's and noblemen's families. Few had the political influence which made it unnecessary for me to seek access to the Church in that way. The consequence was that almost all divinity students were eager to get tutorships. In this capacity—entering the houses of landed gentlemen, associating there with people of cultivated habits, and becoming in a sense members of the family—they, however humble their origin, acquired those courteous and genteel manners which were more the characteristic of the ministers of my early days than they are of their successors.

This old system is now abandoned. The landed gentry, and others too, send their boys to England, either to public schools, or to the charge of some clergyman of the English Church, who, by his own hard toil and to the loss of the people committed to his charge, ekes out a wretched living by receiving pupils. Either way, the

boys get Anglified and Episcopalianized, and thereby the gulf which separates them from the mass of the people is made wider and wider; much to the loss of the country, and very much, as events will prove, to the danger of the upper classes of society.

It is not easy to know how to supply the want of these tutorships, in order to educate in polite manners those candidates for the ministry who have come from the lower classes of society. Short of a moral crime, nothing is more offensive in a minister than vulgarity; unless, indeed, it be when they swing over to the other side, and we have vulgar gentility and a pompous affectation of high breeding. With my own ears I heard an Independent minister in England—a very fine gentleman, with his ring and well-arranged hair—deeming *meal* a very vulgar term, speak of the widow's barrel of "*flour*," when referring to her who had the cruse of oil and barrel of meal; and to my old country neighbourhood there came a Seceder youth, affecting such refinement that, while some of his worthy predecessors would have called children *bairns*, he spoke of them as "those sweet and interesting bipeds that call man father!"

Now, however vulgar themselves, the common people appreciate and admire good breeding and gentle manners in their minister. There was an old minister of Brechin, grandfather of Dr. John Bruce of Edinburgh, who maintained, and rightly, that every truly pious man, every true Christian, had in him the elements of a true gentleman. I have heard the old people in Brechin tell how

he illustrated that by appealing to the manner in which Abraham received the three Strangers who approached his tent; and, certainly, the single chapter in Genesis which relates that story is worth more than the whole volume of Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son. He would also refer to Joseph when summoned from prison to the palace of Pharaoh. It is said that Joseph "shaved himself and changed his raiment." "Joseph," said old Mr. Bruce, "did not go to Pharaoh foul and begrimed as he lay in prison. No; but he got himself shaved and shirted like a gentleman, and then he went in unto Pharaoh!"

Dr. Davidson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh when I attended college (brother-in-law of the celebrated Lord Cockburn), a man of landed property, and—better than all—one of the most pious and devout ministers of his or any day, was so impressed with the importance of ministers adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour by all freedom from vulgarity and a certain polish of manners, that I have heard of the good old man actually himself teaching such manners to a pious but awkward lad from some remote island or glen of the north. To the back of the door went the venerable Doctor, and to the amazement of the gaping boor, opened it to make him, and teach him how to make, a profound bow! On another occasion, it is said he slipped a bank-note into the hands of a poor student, beneath whose coarser crust, however, he discerned both uncommon piety and uncommon talents, saying, "Take that, my dear lad, and

go to Mr. ——," (naming him), "you will be much the better of a quarter at the dancing."

Might not the churches learn from examples like these, as from their own observation and good sense, to supply what is lacking in the education of their ministers, and see that all of them learn, as Paul says, to "be courteous"? I have known ministers whose usefulness in the pulpit and out of it was very much impaired by their vulgarity. Even Paul may have owed some of his influence to the circumstance, which may be seen on the surface of his addresses, that he was not less a polite gentleman than a great orator. "Rough diamonds," as some are called, are better than Bristol stones, but polished ones better than either.

The Church of England has, strange to say, no prescribed course of study for her clergy. The power of the bishop in that matter is or was absolute: and so, at the end of the long war after Waterloo, some officers, finding their vocation gone, doffed the red coat to put on the black, thereby surprising the world and descending as a curse on certain poor parishes. It was enough that they had friends among the patrons, and bishops on the bench to ordain them, irrespective altogether of their qualifications for the ministry, or of the souls committed to their charge.

The Church of Scotland, on the contrary—as she still does, and as, with slight modifications in some instances, all Presbyterians in Scotland do—requires her students to study literature and philosophy for four years and

divinity for other four; and even after this, no young man is licensed to preach, nor any licentiate ordained to the ministry, till he has given proof of his fitness, by delivering a certain number of discourses before the Presbytery, and submitting to an examination by them also on all the subjects he has studied during his eight years at the university. No profession requires so long, and few so costly, an apprenticeship; which, I may remark, makes it all the more disgraceful that, with a preparation so great, ministers should usually receive a payment so small; *starvings* being a better name than *livings* for many of their charges. Some gentlemen pay their French cooks, and many merchants their clerks, a larger salary than he receives who has charge of their souls, and in whom they expect the piety of an apostle, the accomplishments of a scholar, and the manners of a gentleman.

Look at my own case: it occupied me eight years to run my regular curriculum. I attended the university, as I have mentioned, for two additional years before I became a licentiate, and other five years elapsed before I obtained a presentation to a vacant church, and became minister of the parish of Arbirlot. Here were fifteen years of my life spent—the greater part of them at no small cost—qualifying myself for a profession which, for all that time, yielded me nothing for my maintenance.

The inadequate means of creditably supporting themselves and their families of which most ministers have to complain, is a very serious matter,—threatening, in an

enterprising and commercial and wealthy country such as ours, to drain away talent from the pulpit, and, through the weakness of its ministry, bring contempt on religion; worse still, perhaps, to make good the sage remark of Matthew Henry—"a scandalous maintenance makes a scandalous ministry."

Part III.

FROM LICENSE TO ORDINATION.

1825—1830.

I WAS licensed* by the Presbytery of Brechin in 1825.†

In passing through my trials for licence, I had to deliver what is called the "Popular Discourse" in public. Ordinarily there is a small attendance on such occasions, the orator addressing himself to a "beggarly account of empty boxes." But, Brechin being my native place, when I ascended the pulpit of its old Cathedral Church, I found myself face to face with a large congregation—a greater trial that, than standing the Presbytery's examination in Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Logic, Moral and Natural Philosophy, Church History, Hebrew, Exegesis, and Dogmatic Theology.

The practice common in the English Church of ministers preaching other people's discourses is, I may

* Having finished his literary and theological training, a candidate for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church is, on attaining the age of twenty-one years, and after certain "trials," licensed by the Presbytery to preach. He is then called a "licentiate," "preacher," or "probationer." He is not ordained until he receives a "call" to a particular congregation; and he is eligible for such call immediately on receiving "licence."

† 2nd February, 1825.

say, unknown with us in Scotland. He who is found out doing so is considered guilty of a disgraceful, if not a dishonest transaction,—of something far worse than smuggling, illicit distilling of whisky, or evading the Custom House duties by running tea and brandy ashore in the dead of night. Nowhere in Scotland would you find what I saw at Oxford—piles of manuscript sermons openly lying on the counter of a bookseller for sale at one shilling a piece, which were bought, the shopkeeper told me, by "young gentlemen entering holy orders." Nor would any mother in Scotland make such a speech as did a lady to me whom I met lately in London. She expressed much pleasure at renewing our acquaintance; but was specially glad at the opportunity of introducing me to her son, who was a clergyman. "He will be so glad to see you," she added, "for, dear Dr. Guthrie, he often preaches your sermons to his people!" Had a Scotch mother a son who went to the pulpit to preach other people's sermons, she would do anything rather than tell it. Not but that I think it were well for their congregations if some of our Scotch ministers, who are not specially gifted as preachers, though very good pastors, would, without being slavish copyists, draw to a large extent on the rich stores of the old divines, or foreign divines, or Puritan Fathers.

It is better in England now; but how great was the ignorance of some of the "young gentlemen in holy orders," and how lightly they took their duty, appears in a circumstance which I have heard a minister of the

Independent Church relate as having occurred to him, when a young man, in England. In the house where he lodged was a young clergyman with whom he became acquainted. On one occasion, this young gentleman expressed unbounded astonishment when he found that the Dissenting preacher composed his own sermons; and, on the latter asking how he got his, he frankly confessed that he had purchased a stock before coming to that place to preach. He was a fine young fellow, honourable, and, up to the measure of his knowledge, faithful and conscientious in the discharge of what he considered his duty. But his ignorance of theological matters was almost incredible. He had studied the Thirty-nine Articles, and was well versed in Paley's Evidences, but beyond that, he seemed to have learned absolutely nothing of theology. One day, the Socinians being mentioned, he asked, "What do they believe?" and on being told that it was rather for what they did not believe, than for what they did, that they were esteemed heterodox, and that especially they denied the Deity of Jesus Christ, he exclaimed with horror and indignation, "What! deny the Deity of our blessed Lord and Saviour! What a set of rascals they must be!"

But to return, after this digression, to my feelings when I rose in the pulpit to face for the first time in my life a public assembly. I felt for a moment as if my tongue would cleave to the roof of my mouth, pretty confident of this, however, that if it were once loosed and set a going, I could go on: and so it did—my

apparent calmness and self-possession being such, that many declared that I spoke and had the bearing of one who had been preaching for years.

Though I read what on that occasion I preached, as was the practice of all on trials for licence, I had made up my mind that I would be no reader; considering then, as, if possible, I do so more now, that he who reads, instead of delivering his sermon looking his hearers fair in the face, throws away a great advantage. With this determination, on the Saturday afternoon thereafter, I took my way to Dun, a parish some four miles from Brechin—once the seat and estate of John Erskine, one of the leaders of the Reformation, and the friend both of Queen Mary and John Knox—having promised to preach my first sermon there. On the road I spent my time repeating, or trying rather to repeat over to myself the sermon I had prepared for the following day; and my memory so often failed me, that I remember well saying to myself, "I have mistaken my profession! I shall never succeed as a preacher!" It was more or less under this depressing feeling I ascended the pulpit at Dun. To be secure against a complete break-down, I, turning over the leaves as I advanced, kept my MS. before me on the Bible; and, though at one time during the first prayer, for an instant, my mind became a perfect blank, I got through my work without halt or blunder, which was then the height of my ambition; and was so happy at that, that I think the hour after I left that pulpit was perhaps the brightest, happiest of all my life.

To get a charge was now my outlook and that of my friends. My father had enough of political influence to secure me a parish through patronage. That happened thus in days that preceded the Reform Bill by a good many years:—

The cluster of Burghs called the Aberdeen Burghs, which consisted of Aberdeen, Bervie, Montrose, Arbroath, and Brechin, then united to send a member to Parliament. The two first supported the Tory interest—Montrose and Arbroath the Whigs: they therefore neutralised each other, leaving Brechin, which was not very pronounced either way, to turn the scale. The real power of returning a member to Parliament lay in my native city—whoever won it, won the day: and, as my father was Provost of the City, and his was much the strongest party in the Council, it may be said that he had virtually the appointment of the member of Parliament.

However bad this state of matters might be for the country, it secured me an amount of political influence, that, altogether irrespective of my own merits, made me sure of a church: and before I had been licensed four months, I had one of the largest charges and best livings of Scotland in my hand—but on a condition, which, thanks to God, I could not stoop to. The Moderate party, as if they foresaw that their time was short, were driving things with a high hand, and Sir Robert Peel, then Home Secretary, was aiding and abetting them. None was appointed to a church, where the Crown was

patron, but such as bound himself to support the Moderate, or anti-popular, and in many instances anti-evangelical, party in the Church. So, notwithstanding my political influence, I found that they would not present me to the charge in question until I would go to Dr. Nicol, at St. Andrew's, the then leader of the Moderates, and there sell my liberty to him, "my birthright for a mess of pottage." Till then, I had taken little interest in Church politics, but lived on equally kindly terms with ministers of both parties. But I recoiled from the idea of this bondage. To persuade me, they said I would have but to pay my respects to Dr. Nicol, that he would ask no questions, nor attempt by any paction to bind me to his party. But, regarding the waiting on him as, though a silent, a distinct pledge that he and the Moderate party would have my vote in the Church Courts, I refused to go, saying that if I could not enter the Church without pledging myself to either party, I would turn to the pursuit of some other profession.

The loss of this church was a great disappointment to me—the way I lost it did not certainly recommend the Moderates to my favour: but it was a blessed Providence for me: their grasping, high-handed tyranny dictated conditions I was too proud (if nothing else) to agree to, and I was thus kept from entering on a charge, the weight of which, as I was then "in the gristle," would have probably dwarfed and stunted me for life.

Not requiring, like many others, to be a tutor for my

maintenance, and having nothing special to do, I wearied staying at home: and so, to enlarge my knowledge, improve my mind, and pursue those studies in anatomy and the natural sciences, such as chemistry and natural history, on which I had spent two years at the Edinburgh University after completing the eight years' curriculum there required by the laws of the Church, I made up my mind to spend the winter of 1826-27 in Paris, as a student at the Sorbonne.

What a difference between travelling then and now, in respect of speed, cost, and comfort! It must have been in the month of November, 1826, that I made the journey to London. I took an outside seat all the way from Edinburgh; and remember that when, after travelling from early morning, we reached Newcastle about midnight, I was so benumbed with cold that I hardly knew I had a leg, to say nothing of a pair. We called a halt for a little while there; and, beyond a brief stoppage for meals, I do not recollect of another all the way to London. On the second night, I exchanged the outside for the interior of the coach; taking for the journey, which we now accomplish in some ten hours, no less than three days and two nights. Wearied and worn with want of sleep, and by three days and two nights' constant, and by no means very comfortable, travelling, I was at last set down in London: and, amid its teeming millions—crowds rushing past who would have hardly stopped to lift me up if I had dropped down dead in the gutter—I felt as solitary as I would in an African

desert. I had never felt so helpless and lonely all my life—I had never been in London till then.

Indeed, I had never crossed the Border before; and, being then more patriotic and less of a cosmopolite than I am now, I remember with what interest I looked on Berwick-on-Tweed, and the scenes of many a bloody fight between the Scotch and English. I remember nothing of my *compagnons de voyage,* but that a very polite matronly lady and a young woman going up to London on service, to whom the guard compassionately gave an inside seat, were my company that night I left the top of the coach; and that then I travelled a good way with four poachers whom two constables had in charge, and who thought so little shame that, on passing a preserve where the pheasants were strutting about as thick and tame as barn-door fools, "Ah, Jack," exclaimed one of them to his fellows, "to be down there!"—an observation which set all a-laughing, poachers, passengers, and constables.

They, the very constables themselves, plainly looked on poaching as our Highlanders did on making whisky without a permit from the Excise, or the farmers and ploughmen, and fishermen of the sea-coast, on running contraband goods, so as to escape the oppressive duties laid on tea and tobacco, or gin and brandy.

Brechin being an inland town, I knew little about the coast smuggling, though I remember the principal farmer in my first parish charge, which lay on the sea-board, telling me how, when he went north from the Lothians,

he often found his servants standing by their ploughs asleep at mid-day: nor knew the reason why, till he discovered that it was no uncommon thing for the ploughmen there to be up all night "running goods," as they called it—discharging boats laden with the contraband goods of a smuggler that had ventured in shore when the darkness concealed her from the cutters that were prowling about.

But, when a boy in Brechin, I was quite familiar with the appearance and on-goings of the Highland smugglers. They rode on Highland ponies, carrying on each side of their small, shaggy, but brave and hardy steeds, a small cask, or "keg," as it was called, of illicit whisky, manufactured amid the wilds of Aberdeenshire or the glens of the Grampians. They took up a position on some commanding eminence during the day, where they could, as from a watch-tower, descry the distant approach of the enemy, the exciseman or gauger: then, when night fell, every man to horse, descending the mountains only six miles from Brechin, they scoured the plains, rattled into the villages and towns, disposing of their whisky to agents they had everywhere; and, now safe, returned at their leisure, or often in triumphal procession. They were often caught, no doubt, with the contraband whisky in their possession. Then they were subjected to heavy fines besides the loss of their goods. But—daring, stout, active fellows—they often broke through the nets, and were not slack, if it offered them a chance of escape, to break the heads of the gaugers. I have seen a troop of

thirty of them riding in Indian file, and in broad day, through the streets of Brechin, after they had succeeded in disposing of their whisky, and, as they rode leisurely along, beating time with their formidable cudgels on the empty barrels to the great amusement of the public and mortification of the excisemen, who had nothing for it but to bite their nails and stand, as best they could, the raillery of the smugglers and the laughter of the people.

Few in the end throve on this trade. Smuggling was a bad thing, as a result in most instances demoralising such as engaged in it; but you could not convince the bulk, and but few of the best of the people, that it was a positively wrong thing. So everybody, with a few exceptions, drank what was in reality illicit whisky—far superior to that made under the eye of the Excise—lords and lairds, members of Parliament and ministers of the gospel, and everybody else; which shows how little wisdom there is, what positive evil there is, in making laws which are not suited to times and circumstances, and commend themselves neither to the reason nor the conscience of the masses—this, when there are great temptations to break it, makes the law be not honoured, but despised.

In London, where I spent two or three weeks, I lived in lodgings in Tabernacle Row, kept by a decent Scotch widow woman. The last night I passed there I was put fairly *hors de combat* by the spectacle which met my eyes on striking a light after I had been some-

time in bed; on looking up, there, on the white curtains, hung scores of bugs, ready to drop down and reinforce the enemy below. As some one said in similar circumstances, if they had only been unanimous, they might have turned me out of bed! I spent the rest of the night on two chairs, glad next day to avail myself of the offered hospitality of a kind but curious countryman.

His name was Allan, and his birthplace Arbroath. He had gone to London long years before as a baker lad, and thriving, had risen to be himself a master-baker, and, latterly, a corn-dealer. When I knew him he had retired from business and become a pretty old man. His time was spent in the study of metaphysics and theology; and his delight was to engage with others in passages-at-arms on these knotty subjects. First meeting him at a dinner party, I happened to sit opposite to him at table; knowing neither who he was, nor what he was, I was surprised, when, addressing me, he said, "What do you consider, sir, the most general of all ideas?" I learned afterwards that by their reply to this strange and startling question he gauged men's capacities. I could hardly have been more astonished though he had given me a blow on the nose; but, taking him for an odd character, and wishing to be courteous, I thought it best to humour him, and, after a moment's reflection, replied, "I would say, Eternity." This came so near what he thought the proper answer—Space namely—that I was instantly enthroned in his good graces; and thinking me "a foeman worthy of his steel," after a tilt on metaphysics, which

showed that he had Watts' Logic at his finger ends, this old Scotch baker rushed into the theological arena, and put me to my mettle to defend Calvinism against the doctrines of Arminius, which he had embraced on leaving the Presbyterian Church to become a Methodist. The result was that he made me an offer of his house, and would not let me go till I had promised to leave my lodgings and accept of his hospitality. He was very kind, a good and devout man, but very queer; an old bachelor, who followed his own ways. On going to his house with my bag and baggage, I found him sitting in his parlour in his shirt sleeves, smoking a long pipe, whose fumes filled the room, but did not seem to disturb a whole flock of canaries, linnets, and bullfinches that occupied the same apartment, and, flying about at their ease from the top of one piece of furniture to another, did everything but perch on the old man's bald head. It was a lone life his; and sometimes I fancied he himself thought the birds but a poor substitute for bairns.

But, to dismiss him for better-known men:—I breakfasted with Dr. Waugh, a minister of the Scotch Secession Church in London, who was celebrated for his eloquence as a preacher, and his singular love for and frequent use of the Scotch tongue. He was a heavenly old man, with the most brilliant pair of eyes, large and black and lustrous, I had ever seen. He was a genius, with much quaint humour; and I have heard that when he, and these two "originals," and remarkable men, Matthew Wilks and Rowland Hill, met (as they often did), their

talk was a treat—a coruscation of meteors, *seria mixta cum jocis*, worth travelling miles to enjoy.

I was often with Mr. Joseph Hume, then member of Parliament for the group called the Aberdeen Burghs. At his house one day I met at dinner Sir John Sinclair, to whom the country owed—what excited the admiration of the first Napoleon—the "Statistical Account of Scotland," and Alderman Wood, the friend of Queen Caroline and father of the present Lord Hatherley. I remember with what interest and astonishment the Alderman listened to the account I was led, somehow or other, to give the company of the way in which the Sabbath was observed generally in the households of Scotland: and also how Joseph Hume, when some looked almost incredulous, struck in, saying, that it was just so when he was a boy in Montrose, and how he remembered it well in his father's house.

Hume was a man of great practical wisdom; held whatever matter he fastened on with the tenacity of a bull-dog; possessed an unblemished character; and had more true, religious principle than the Tories and Churchmen, who hated and abused him, gave him credit for. He, certainly, was not a man of genius; and had no more appreciation of it than I have of music. I remember breakfasting with him in Edinburgh after he had attended and spoken along with Andrew Thomson at an Anti-Patronage Meeting on the preceding day. Thomson was then, as he always was, most effective; stepping forth as a grand debater—the prince of debaters—crushing the

arguments employed by the friends of Patronage to powder, and, by some inimitably funny stories, covering them with ridicule. I expected to find Joseph charmed with Thomson. Not he! All he said was, "he seems rather a humorous man." Though broad and loose in some of his views, he was a better man, as I have said, than many took him for. His family, as I had opportunities of seeing, had a religious training; and he was a wise and true friend to many a young man whom his influence and patronage helped on to fortune.

I was much touched with a proof of a kindly heart which Mr. Hume gave me but a few months before his death. He and I had, in many respects, taken different courses; I had had no correspondence with him for twenty years. Yet, on passing through Edinburgh, he called at my house. I was from home, but he sought an interview with my wife; said he had heard from Sir George Sinclair, with whom he had been staying at Thurso Castle, that I had a large number of sons; and that he came to say that he would be very happy to do what in him lay to help them on by his influence.

He was the only man of all the great ones of the earth I have known that ever made me such an offer. Not but that from some of them, I am sure, had I asked their patronage, I would have got it, and got it very cordially; but (as my wife, while most gratefully thanking him, explained to Mr. Hume) I wished to preserve my independence, and, so, made it a principle to ask no patronage for my children from men in place and power. I had

fought my own battle, and they must fight theirs. People have often expressed their wonder to me why I did not get good, snug, lucrative berths for my sons in Government offices and in India. Well, I could have done that; but at the loss of my independence as a public man. Besides, how could I have solicited favours for my own family, and refused my good offices on behalf of others? I was so situated, I should have been made the medium of so many applications, that I would soon have been dubbed "The Solicitor-General," and become such a bore as to lose all influence for good with those who, under God, shaped the course and ruled the destinies of the country. I did occasionally intercede on behalf of others, but only where I had public grounds to stand on, where the educational, moral, or religious interests of the community were concerned—never otherwise.

At that my first visit to London, I saw His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex lay the foundation-stone of the London University. He was the only one of George III.'s family I ever saw; for, when George IV. came to Edinburgh, I did not move a step to see one of the worst men that ever disgraced a throne—a base fellow, who had all the bad, without any of the redeeming qualities of Charles II. I sought Rowland Hill's Chapel, being very anxious to hear a man who was possessed of such remarkable abilities, and whom God had so highly honoured to stir up England and convert souls. I, however, stumbled in among Wesleyan Methodists, and was fortunate enough to find the pulpit occupied by the

celebrated Adam Clarke. He was greater as a Commentator than a preacher.

I usually dined at an eating-house in the City in company with an old school-fellow, who was then a clerk in a mercantile house. We bought rump-steak at a butcher's stall, carried it away with us in our pockets wrapped in paper, got it cooked with potatoes, and had probably some beer or porter, and I remember the dinner cost in all but one shilling, and we had rare fun to make us relish it. The place was a favourite resort of English lads, clerks like my friend Allardice, and how we used to play on their ignorance and credulity! It was then I first saw the narrow limits and defects of the ordinary education of English schools. These lads were, I doubt not, thorough masters of their own particular departments of business; but, beyond the small hole they filled—like certain shell-fish in the sea-rocks—they were amazingly ignorant of everything outside.

I cannot remember whether it was at this time, or on my return from Paris,* that I saw a grand encounter in the House of Commons between Mr. Canning and the Whigs who supported him on his becoming Prime Minister, and the Tories, his old friends, and now deadly foes. I got an order from Mr. Hume, who warned me I should hear nothing but some discussions about the shipping interest, to be brought on by Mr. Huskisson. But,

* It was the latter. The debate (which took place on 3rd May, 1827) is alluded to in a contemporaneous letter, which will be found in the Memoir.

unexpectedly, Canning appeared for the first time that night as the head of the Government. This was the signal for battle; Dawson, Sir Thomas Lethbridge, and others leading the assault against the Government. I marked Brougham sitting with his hand resting on one of the iron pillars of the old House of Commons, immovable for an hour or so, with his eyes fixed like a basilisk's on the two assailants. When they had closed, up he rose to a task for which he could have made no preparation, and which was the most extraordinary display of reasoning, sarcasm, withering denunciation, and eloquence I ever heard. Canning stepped for a moment into the arena, but, leaving the fight to his troops, contented himself as he looked over on the Opposition benches, with exclaiming in trumpet tones, and his arm suiting the words, "I rejoice that the banner of opposition is unfurled!" Sir Thomas Lethbridge that night spoke the speech of a bitter Tory, Sir Francis Burdett that of an extreme Whig. I lived to see them change sides years thereafter—Lethbridge dying a Whig, and Burdett a Tory.

The journey from London to Paris, like that from Edinburgh to London, occupied three days and two nights. I remember of being much struck on landing at Calais at the sight of a lofty crucifix which stood by the pier, representing our Lord hanging in blood and agony on the accursed tree, and of looking with mingled awe and wonder and horror on that symbol of Popery, the first of the kind I had seen. I travelled with an Indian

colonel whom I had met at dinner at Mr. Hume's, and whom I found very useful on the road, as he spoke French well, and the tongue of the natives was as little comprehended by me as Chinese would have been. Though I could read the language pretty well, I had never learned to speak it.

Determined, however, to do so, I asked the colonel, on our reaching Paris, to recommend me to an hotel where I would meet with none who could speak anything but French. This he did; and, on driving into the court, I soon found into what a scrape my determination to plunge over head and ears into the French tongue and French society had brought me. There I stood beside my luggage, surrounded by a bevy of servants, men and women, who jabbered away at me in vain, while I, as much in vain, sought to reach their understandings. I now began to think I was a big fool, to have left my comfortable home for such a ridiculous and uncomfortable predicament. From this I was extricated by the sharpness of a demoiselle, who, making something out of my crude French, directed one of the porters to hoist my trunk on his back, and, with most gracious smiles beckoning me to follow, led the way into the house, and up three pairs of stairs to a bedroom. When the porter had deposited his load and retired, she poured forth on me a rapid volley of French, in which I could make nothing out but the word *l'eau*, or water. The lass wished to know whether I wanted warm water, for she saw my cheeks and chin with a crop of three days' growth. How-

ever, I had forgotten that *eau* was feminine, and could not for the life of me make out what she meant with her "*de l'eau chaude,*" contenting myself with pointing her to the ewers that stood already filled. She laughed, and I laughed also, at our absurd position. At length, however, she lost all patience, and began to dance round me, screaming out at the pitch of her lungs; when, all of a sudden, a happy thought occurred to her. Some way or other she had caught hold of the English word that, with some help from the language of signs, was to solve the mystery. So, planting herself right in front of me, she laid her finger on her cheek, and, making it describe the sweep of a razor, she cried, "*Shaav, shaav, monsieur?*" They are a smart set, these French, men and women of them. It had been long till a Scotch or English lass had done anything so clever as that!

Next day I went to call on a Madame Pellerin, an old school acquaintance, who had been married to a French gentleman who was in a bank in Paris; and, when I saw the face of my old friend, and heard my own tongue again with a slight touch of the Brechin Doric, was not I, in this city of a strange people and a strange language, very happy indeed! I used to dine at Pellerin's once a month or so, or oftener, and spent many a happy evening there, for they were very kind; and by-and-by Pellerin and I got on swimmingly in the way of conversation, he addressing me in French, which I came to follow quite easily, and I speaking to him in English, which he understood but could not speak

readily. I would linger there till eleven o'clock at night, having afterwards half the breadth of Paris to traverse before I got to my lodgings; but, though they talked much of assassinations that winter, I never saw anything to alarm me, and in many a street met no one almost but the *gendarmes* keeping watch and ward with musket and fixed bayonet.

My friend Pellerin found me lodgings in a *pension* in Rue Cassette, with a Madame St. Marc, and I remember well how I stared with astonishment to see him, on a servant girl opening the *grande porte*, take his hat off his head, and bowing as to a duchess, address her as "mademoiselle." Such were French manners; and though they may occasionally present a caricature of courteousness, we in this country would do well to learn somewhat of their good breeding.

There were, as I found, on entering the *salle à manger*, some twenty or thirty boarders in this *pension*,—some half-dozen of whom, being English and Irish, clustered together near the foot of the table. Steady to my purpose of learning the French tongue, I eschewed the society of my compatriots; and requested Madame to place me among the French. I must have got on very lamely, however, judging from a blunder which, to the amusement of my neighbours, I committed the very first day. It was common in Brechin, on declining anything more at meals, to say, "I am finished;" so, when Madame St. Marc asked me whether I would have any more, in place of saying "*J'ai fini*," I replied "*Je suis fini*;" which, being

equal to a declaration not that I had dined, but died, both amazed and amused our hostess and her guests! We had a Greek princess and her sister there—the first a woman of exquisite beauty. We had an old Irish spinster, who wrote French novels, and bothered me to read them; a clever woman she, as shown in the way she discovered and proved the nationality of an *up-setting* conceited fellow who, notwithstanding we suspected the contrary, asserted he was an Englishman and not an Irishman. His positive and indignant assertions had silenced, if not convinced us, when one day, all of a sudden, his countrywoman, the novelist, who went by the name of Mademoiselle Hiver —her true name being Miss Winter—looking down the table shook her long, skinny finger at him, saying, "I know you are an Irishman;" adding, to his blushing guilt and confusion and our great astonishment: "Sor, I know it by the way you peel your potato!"

It was from the boarders in this *pension*, as well as from the head of it—a most respectable boarding-house it was considered—that I got my first view of the rottenness of French morals and society. Not that Madame St. Marc was a professed sceptic, without any belief in God or fear of Him: this came out one day when the trumpet of a troop of cuirassiers sounded forth as they rode past the house, while I was taking breakfast beside her in the *salle à manger*. "What a fine sound!" I said. "I hate to hear it!" she replied; "because," she added, on my expressing my astonishment to hear her say so, "it reminds me of the Day of Judgment!" But how

low the tone of the household over which she presided! Having, on going out, to hang the key of my bedroom in the porter's lodge, and seek it there on my return, I had occasion to be often, and sometimes in the evening, there; and I used to be shocked, when I had to go to the lodge of an evening, at the foul conversation passing between the boarders and the servant girls, in which they seemed to think there was neither sin nor shame.

But perhaps the worst of all those I met there was a Count Robiano, an old grey-haired man, and in manners a perfect gentleman, who, as a refugee royalist, had spent many years in England, and was well acquainted with our tongue. Madame St. Marc, or some one else, had recommended him to me as a teacher of French; and, indeed, it was in this way, having lost all his property and almost his life in the terrible days of the Revolution, that he supported himself. This brought him in contact with many young men, no doubt to their ruin. He was a wretched, pitiable old man, haunted by the fear of death, with little pleasure in this world, and no good hope for the next; as came out when I was talking to him about the beautiful cemetery of Père la Chaise. He shook his grey head, saying, "I have not seen it for many years; it is a gloomy place, full of death that I flee the thought of; indeed, I dislike to pass a funeral, and, if I see one coming along the street, get out of its way by turning off into a side street, if I can." But teaching was not his only means of support. This hoary-headed sinner, whose profession brought him in contact with young men

like me, and whose manners were most insinuating, was a panderer to licentious establishments and gambling-houses in Paris. He led the ox to the slaughter, and was no doubt paid for it. One day, when he thought he had won my confidence—though I was not long in suspecting that this Count was no better than he should be—he presented me with a blazoned and perfumed card, on which I read my name with a gracious invitation from a lady to a *soirée* in her house. I wrung enough out of him to convince me that this was a regular trap, and was so indignant at any man—and especially an old man—lending himself to such an infamous employment, that I sternly refused his invitation, and soon dispensed with his services. They would need to be well confirmed in their moral and religious principles, who are exposed to the snares, temptations, and immoral influences of French society; and those parents are either very careless or very ignorant, who, for the sake of the Parisian accent, the French, German, or Italian tongues, send their children abroad to be educated.

Among the twenty or thirty boarders in this *pension*, there were some half-dozen of us compatriots. One of these, an Englishman called Everett, presented a curious but not uncommon case of idiosyncrasy. He had been intended for the medical profession, but was studying chemistry, having found out that, though a stout, hearty, healthy fellow, he could not overcome his tendency to grow sick at the sight of blood. One day I induced him to accompany me to the hospital to see a man get his

leg amputated, persuading him that perhaps his nerves had grown stronger. Lisfranc, the surgeon, entered the operating theatre before the patient was carried in, and spreading out his knives and instruments on the table, filled up the time by addressing to us some remarks on these and the *modus operandi*. Everett sat beside me, and a slight motion of his made me look round at him. He was pale as death; so sickened by the sight of the knives only, that he staggered up, and was glad to escape.

Acting on the principle that he who would be respected must show that he respects himself, I was obliged to teach one of his (Everett's) countrymen a lesson in good manners. Presuming on the fact that he had been born on the English side of the Border, he began, before I had been two days in the *pension*, to show me some impertinence at table, to hold something I had said up to ridicule: nor did I retaliate till he had repeated, and I judged it time to stop the offence. But then I paid him back in his own coin; never allowing him to open his mouth, unless to put a spoon into it, but I caught him up, to ridicule or refute him. He needed the lesson, and it was attended with very happy effects. After a few days of this regimen, Boots, for that was his name, came to me, and acknowledging his offence, most humbly begged I would let him alone; a request I was so prompt and happy to grant that Monsieur Bottes, as we called him, and I became henceforth very good friends.

Madame St. Marc, the lady of the *pension*, had a grown-up but unmarried daughter who used to dine at

our table, but, tied fast to her mother's apron, marched in and marched out as a prisoner, was never allowed to exchange a word with any of us. Such are French manners. They have no faith in modesty or virtue. Young unmarried women are guarded almost as closely as the inmates of a zenana: and if all tales are true, or half true, when married—most of the marriages are more affairs of *convenance* than affection—they often turn their liberty into licentiousness.

This lady had also a son in the house—a medical student by profession—who was, I suspected, a *mauvais sujet.* He fawned for a short while on me; but assumed distant and surly airs on finding that I would not entertain his very modest proposal, that I should on leaving Paris take him with me to see Scotland, and travel and live at my charges. A man needs not only good principles, but to have his wits about him, in such a place as Paris. Our porter made some overtures of the same kind. But he was an honest fellow—a German, who had the misfortune to have married a Frenchwoman of a very bad type,—a fat, bold, brazen-faced, animal-looking woman. She was a bad one. He knew that; was very unhappy, and as they had no family, the poor fellow thought it no wrong, if he had an opportunity, to divorce himself from her, and leave her to her own devices.

With all their lacquer, and polite manners, and french polish, and taste in dressing, the French, as seen in the servant girls who were in that *pension,* are essentially not only an immoral, but a coarse people, destitute of all true

delicacy. But I remember with pleasure one exception—Adèle, the young woman who waited on the suite of rooms where mine was. She was a modest, well-conditioned girl, whom I have seen shedding bitter tears over the misfortunes that had ruined her family, and reduced her to the condition of a servant. A country district in France was her native home. There her father, who united the business of a smith to that of a small proprietor, cultivating his own land, had been, if not in affluent, in most comfortable circumstances. The Prussian armies making for Paris, and burning to be avenged on the French, passed that way; and the tide of war rolling over this happy home left it a wreck—a family broken-up and impoverished, the provision for widow and children, the gains of years of honest labour, lost in a day. Such is war, man's deepest shame and God's heaviest scourge!

Another person was there, a Frenchman, for whom I cherished a genuine respect. His name was Fevrier. Originally intended for the Church, he had spent some years in a Jesuit college in Lyons. He was a devout and well-instructed young man, yet amazingly ignorant of the Bible. Many a tough battle, carried on in my room till midnight, had we on the respective merits of Popery and Protestantism. I used to help him, when he was fumbling over its leaves, to find out those passages of Scripture to which he would refer as favouring his cause, for he had never—as he acknowledged on my presenting him with a copy of the Old and New Testament in

French—had the whole Bible in his hands before. I was astonished to find a devout man like him defending (when I urged it as an argument against the Roman Catholic system of celibacy) the licentious and irregular life of many of the priests. I had met nothing so damnatory of Popery, no such proof of its corrupting influences, as this; for Fevrier was a pious man, nor shall I ever forget the awe and solemnity of manner with which, one day as we were walking in the Gardens of the Luxembourg, and in answer to my question why he had abandoned his studies for the Church, he uncovered his head and touching it said, "Ah, the shaven crown is a solemn thing!" After he left this *pension*—where, being a relation of hers, he was living in galling dependence on Madame St. Marc till he got a situation as a teacher—I visited him in his own lodgings, and found him teaching French to a shawled and turbaned Mussulman, one of those sent to Paris by Ibrahim Pacha; the said Mahometan drinking in learning and wine together, and laughing heartily when I adverted to the inconsistency between his faith and works. I never saw Fevrier more in this world, but hope to meet him in a better.

After passing some three months at Madame St. Marc's, I left for a lodging-house on Quai St. Michel, called "Hôtel de l'Etoile du Nord." Here I got breakfast in the *parloir* of the family, consisting of bread, butter, and coffee, for which I paid one franc. I dined at a restaurant, and for the same money had a bowl of soup, a plate of *marmelade de pommes*, bread and potatoes, and

a small quantity of beer, enough in all to make a good dinner. Coffee in the evening I made in my room for myself, and any student who happened to visit me. Monsieur Petit, the master of this hotel or lodging-house, had a wife and three daughters, and a more decent, respectable family was not in Paris. He had interesting details to give of the French Revolution, its scenes of terror and blood—having been, as one of the National Guard, in the palace when the Swiss bodyguard of the poor king were massacred. There were a number of other lodgers in the house—some of them breakfasting along with me; and all, with hardly an exception, were avowed infidels.

I remember of an unexpected meeting there with John Bunyan. The youngest girl attended a Sunday-school kept by a priest in one of the churches in the neighbourhood. One of these I was in the habit of looking in upon, during the interval between the Protestant service in the Oratoire and my dinner hour. The instruction on the whole was good; but I used to be amused rather at the sedulous care of the priest to uphold the Church—he never quoting God's Word in proof of any doctrine without saying, "as the Bible saith, and the Church teacheth!" Well, I learned from M. Petit's lassie that at her Sunday-school they distributed prizes; and on her telling me she had got one, I asked to see it. Fancy my pleasure and astonishment when she brought it out and placed in my hands "*Le Progrès d'un Pélerin, par Jean Bunyan,*"—The Pilgrim's Progress, by John Bunyan,

one of the prizes of a Roman Catholic Sunday-school! Turning to the introduction by the Roman Catholic translator, I found him telling his readers that he had made no alterations in the book beyond a few; and, on turning to the book itself, I found him to be as good as his word; of course the scene, where giant Pope sits at the mouth of the cave biting his nails because he is no longer able to destroy and kill the pilgrims, was omitted.

Thirty years afterwards, I visited Paris, which by that time under Louis Napoleon had undergone great changes. As salmon return to their old rivers, and swallows to the nest and neighbourhood of their birth, I made for Quai St. Michel to see if I could recognise the place of my old hotel; and how was I surprised in driving along to read on the front of a house, and of the same house, the old sign "Hôtel de l'Etoile du Nord." Curious to see inside, I jumped from the cabriolet and rang the bell. A servant appeared to ask whether I wanted lodgings. "No," I said, "but I lived here thirty years ago, and would be obliged by your allowing me to step into this room," pointing to the well-known door of the parlour. In I went; and in a moment recognised on the walls portraits of my old friends Monsieur and Madame Petit. Instantly I asked, "Who keeps this hotel now?"

"Mademoiselle Petit," she said.

Quite delighted to find that they were not all dead and gone, as I supposed likely, I requested her to send Mademoiselle to me. By-and-by the door opens, and a

grave, rather elderly-like spinster appears, in whom I traced some likeness to the lassie of fourteen I had known thirty years before.

"Do you know me?" I asked.

"No, Monsieur."

"Are you sure you never saw me before?"

"Quite sure, Monsieur."

The next shot did not miss. The French being unable because of its *th* to sound my name of Guthrie aright, I went in this family by the sobriquet of "*le grand Monsieur*," on account of my height, my standing six feet two and a half inches without the shoes. So I next asked—

"Do you not remember '*le grand Monsieur*'?"

No sooner said, than she started, and, a flash of joy lighting up her countenance, rushed forward, seized me by the hand, and was so happy; indeed, I thought she was going to embrace me! It was a delightful rencontre, for I had a great respect for that worthy family, was sorry to part with them, on which occasion I had after the French fashion to kiss them all, the old woman not excepted in the round. The father and mother had been long dead; her two sisters were very comfortably married to English merchants, and resided in London.

Opposite this hotel, across the Pont St. Michel, on the Isle de la Cité, between the Hôtel Dieu and Notre Dame, stood the Morgue, a building into which all dead bodies netted in the Seine or found lying in the streets were carried. I used to go there every three days to keep a reckoning of their number. There they lay—exposed

on the table of a room that had a glass wall, to be recognised—their clothes being hung on pins above them. Most of the bodies had been taken from the Seine, and many were frightfully swollen. I did not see more than one or two cases of assassination. I have seen as many as a dozen or two laid out there at a time; and used to know before entering the building the state of matters. A frivolous set, and fond of any kind of excitement, if there was a goodly array of naked corpses, the French women would be coming out from the grim spectacle chattering like as many sparrows, talking, gesticulating, in a state of excitement. A large proportion of these cases were suicides—a practice to which the French, being unbelievers, are much given,—many the results of gambling and the despair that succeeds a long run of bad luck at play.

Soon after my arrival in Paris, I enrolled myself as a student at the Sorbonne, and this, which cost me but a mere trifle, opened to me all the classes, but the theological; these I would have occasionally attended, but found them shut against me, being a Protestant.

During the five months or so I spent in Paris, I attended the classes of three very distinguished men—the most distinguished men of their age in their own departments of science. First, Gay-Lussac, Professor of Natural Philosophy; he it was who made the celebrated ascent in a balloon which rose to the then unprecedented height of 23,000 feet above the sea-level; second, Thénard, celebrated as the father of French

chemistry; and third, St. Hilaire, who pursued strange and original speculations on the subject of monsters and monstrosities, and was at the head of all comparative anatomists. The two first had classes of 700 or 800 each or more, made up of all nationalities, and presenting—before the Professor appeared, and while the students were talking and shouting to each other from distant benches—a perfect Babel of tongues, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, English, and, occasionally and unmistakably, what fell like music on my ear, good broad Scotch.

This last, by the way, I have found very serviceable in railway carriages abroad; when, perhaps speaking about them, I wanted to make sure my foreign fellow-travellers should not understand what I was saying to some countryman or countrywoman. One is never quite sure of this if he speak English, as so many foreigners are acquainted with that tongue, to which, indeed, I have often caught them listening; in such cases I have found perfect safety in good broad Scotch, when I had anything to say of the company that were present.

In Gay-Lussac's class I had an opportunity of seeing how heartily the priests were hated by students, literary men, and such like. Some two or three dozen young men, preparing for the Church, and dressed in their peculiar garb, attended his class; and, no sooner did they, entering in a body, make their appearance, than it was the signal for universal uproar, and furious cries from all parts of "*A bas les prêtres! A bas les prêtres!*"

nor were these riots, which grew worse day by day, quelled until the young priests marched in attended by a guard of *gendarmes*. I was sorry for these lads; and sympathised the less with those who assailed them, as the most of them were actuated more by antipathy to the Christian religion itself than to the caricature of it which Popery presents; although to the latter I, at the same time, believed the infidelity and immorality of France were mainly due.

Besides attending these classes daily, I used to walk one or other of the celebrated hospitals of Paris. To do so, I had to be up in the dark and cold winter mornings by six o'clock or so; and—necessity being the mother of invention—it was then I learned to shave in the dark. In those days there were no lucifers to light a candle. The clinical visits of the surgeons were gone through before breakfast, to which I used to return at nine o'clock with my fingers benumbed, my whiskers as white as they are now, the extreme cold having frozen the moisture of my breath on them.

The frost that winter far exceeded any I ever felt at home. It stopped dissection in the anatomical rooms for six weeks. I remember of being in one with forty dead bodies lying on the tables, each not only as cold but as hard as marble; and among them the body of a woman, one of the most beautiful in form or in feature ever seen in living flesh, or sculptured in lifeless marble. She must have died or been put to death in full health, so to speak. Her features were not pinched nor her

cheeks sunk, nor had her eyes, which remained open, lost all their lustre, while a perfect affluence of long, raven hair flowed over her breast and shoulders, falling down almost to the floor. . . .

It was a pitiful and touching sight, awakening both solemn and painful reflections. In France, as will be found in every country where Popery or infidelity are rampant, they pay little respect either to the living or the dead. It is the Bible which presents the body for our reverence and respect as the "temple of the Holy Ghost." Only once did I see modesty in a female patient rebel against exposures before a crowd of students which would not be so much as proposed by any surgeon of a public hospital in our country; and, on that occasion, the poor woman was laughed to scorn by the students, and as rudely abused as handled by the surgeon.

Yet there was no want of kindness in a way. I have seen Lisfranc—a great surgeon but a very rough bear—where the case was a very serious one, treat his patient as tenderly as a mother: nor shall I ever forget how sensitive he showed himself on one occasion under an ordinary apparent indifference to the feelings or even life of those under his knife. He was removing a cancerous breast from a woman, and, along with that, diseased glands from the arm-pit. While engaged in that, the last part of the operation, all of a sudden he stopped and turned pale as death, quickly turning round to fix a most anxious gaze on the face of his patient, stretched on the operating table. We saw there was something serious;

the silence in the theatre, as we watched the knife, only broken before by the occasional low moans of the sufferer, became deeper than ever; all held their breath, till there burst from Lisfranc a sigh of relief heard over all the theatre. "Gentlemen," he said, "I thought I heard a sound indicating that, while I was removing these glands, air had got into a vein. That had been fatal; and I stopped in dread of seeing her die in my hands!"

This incident raised Lisfranc in my esteem; showing that he had the heart of a true surgeon, who regards as equally sacred the life of a poor woman and of a princess.

I watched for weeks and with great interest his manufacture of a living nose. His patient, an old soldier of the Empire, had lost that feature in Russia, in that terrible winter which cost France so many lives. The piece of skin and flesh which supplied the lost nose was cut and twisted down from the brow. Adhesion taking place more strongly on one side than the other, set the nose awry, and it had to be set even again. In spite of the lead with which he plugged them, now this and now that nostril would fill up. Into what a storm of rage I have seen him work himself, as he told us how Dupuytren had said that he had only succeeded in making a nose like a *pomme de terre* or potato, and here he would appeal to us whether it was the least like a potato; an appeal I left the French students to respond to. The said nose having no bridge, I could not in good conscience say it was not like a *pomme de terre;* still it was an improvement on the former state of things.

One day I went to the Hôtel Dieu, and saw the celebrated Dupuytren perform some operations, one of them presenting a display of passive courage worthy of a Red Indian. The nails of the great toes had grown into the flesh of a workman, who limped up to Dupuytren. He pointed to a stool; and, on the man placing his foot there, he took a long angular pair of scissors and ran one blade under the nail up to the root, then, closing the blades, divided the nail; and finally, seizing the section which was growing into the flesh, he, with one jerk, tore it off, repeating the same process on the other foot. No torture practised by the Red Indians, or invented by the Inquisition, could have been more cruel than this; yet the man never paled, moved a muscle, or uttered a sound. This might be due to a strong will and great self-control, but it might be the apathy which is often mistaken for true courage; though no more that, than the indifference with which an officer rode up to a battery of cannon, and who, observing another officer at his side looking pale, turned in his saddle to accost him, saying, "You are afraid!" "True," replied his comrade, bringing out the nature of true courage; "and were you as much afraid as I am, you would turn tail!"

I also went to the Hôpital des Invalides, where Baron Larry presided, and saw that distinguished surgeon, who was so great a favourite of the first Napoleon and was at his side in all his battles. La Place was buried that winter I was in Paris, and Cuvier, though alive, had ceased to lecture. I was introduced to Say, the celebrated

political economist, who received me in his house very graciously; and also to an eminent literateur and politician, then editor of the *Constitutionnel*.* The latter made no concealment either of his immorality or infidelity; but owned, nevertheless, the necessity and advantages of a religion. I well remember the homage he paid to Protestantism and Presbytery, saying that the faith and Church government of Scotland—her Protestantism, and especially her Presbytery—were the only forms of religion favourable to, and, indeed, consistent with, a constitutional government and the enjoyment of civil liberty.

Having spent the whole winter session in hard study I gave the last two weeks of my residence there to its sights. Among others, I went one night to a celebrated gambling-house in the Palais Royal, where Blucher was said to have lost much money. We had to give up our sticks at the door. The *salles* were crowded, chiefly by the shopkeeping and working classes. Five-franc pieces and francs were the common stakes. Many a rough and despairing man was there: it was men from these, who having staked and lost their all went to throw themselves into the Seine, and fill the tables of the Morgue.

From this we went on to Frascati's. Others were required to have introductions here; but it was enough for any of our countrymen to show his passport. On our doing so, the door was thrown open, and we found ourselves in a splendid and ample hall, surrounded by

* Jean-Alexandre Buchon.

lacqueys in gorgeous livery. The interior was like a palace. Different kinds of play were going on in different rooms, and piles of gold shifted hands to the throw of the rattling dice, or the wheel of *rouge et noir*. In one room forty or fifty engaged in the latter game were seated at a long table, and among them magnificently dressed women, decked out in all manner of meretricious charms. They were there for other purposes than gambling, and amused themselves watching the changing fortunes of the players. There we could have ordered wine or whatever we liked, and, had we remained to the close, might have sat down to a luxurious supper, and all without charge. Such were the traps laid for the unwary. It was a hell of a place, ruining thousands, but from which, with other such places, the Government drew an immense revenue. Happily, the French Government, like some since then in Germany, has come to see that a revenue drawn from the vices and demoralisation of the people is dearly bought; and now the gambling-houses, like those in Germany, are closed.

With this ends my account of that winter in the French capital, which I left one morning in the middle of April, 1827, to make my way home through Belgium.

The journey between Paris and Brussels, which is now made by railway in eleven hours, occupied three days and nights. It was done by *diligence;* the horses, which were many, carrying postilions, dressed in the old French style, and wearing enormous boots. Out of a choice of routes, I chose that which passed through

Noyon, that I might see the birthplace of John Calvin, the man who, next to the Apostle Paul, has left the deepest mark on the religious world, and whose intellect, in the judgment of such men and philosophers as Sir William Hamilton, was one of the greatest any man of any country or race ever possessed.

We passed through Noyon at dead of night. I saw but one light in a window of the street through which we drove, amidst unbroken silence. So, I thought, the young reformer's might have been shining three centuries before, when he was preparing, with Martin Luther, to lead the assault against the Church of Rome. But Rome still held possession of his birthplace, if one might judge from the sight I saw on leaving it. A great crucifix stood up at the outskirts, and there, at that late hour and in that lone place, the moonlight showed a woman kneeling, with her arms thrown around the tree, and her head bent to the ground; and I could not but hope that she was a true penitent, in error, but still clinging with her heart to Christ as she clung with her arms to the cross; any way, at that midnight hour, in that lonely spot, a woman bowed by some secret grief to the earth, and seeking relief in prayer under the shadow of that lofty cross and its divine burden, was a solemn and touching sight.

In that journey I was also gratified at passing through Cambray, redolent with memories of the great and good Archbishop Fénélon; though some of these were melancholy, —such as his bowing, against the dictates both of

his reason and his conscience, to the authority of the Pope; his case affording one of the most remarkable proofs of the mental and moral religious thraldom in which the Roman Catholic religion holds its votaries—making them slaves.

An incident occurred on our way through France which was very pleasing to my national vanity. At a *cabaret*, where the diligence changed horses, and we halted for refreshments, a Prussian officer got into a fierce dispute with some French people on how the battle of Waterloo was lost and won. He maintained that "*la grande nation*" was fairly and thoroughly beaten by the English army in that fight. What clamour of tongues, volleys of oaths, fierce gesticulations, this bold and mortifying assertion raised! The poor patriots could not get over the fact that they were beaten; but they stoutly denied that the English beat them, asserting that, but for the Scotch regiments, they would have routed *les Anglais*. Whereupon, when the war of words had come to that, I, though till then taking no part in the dispute, could not help saying, "*Je suis Ecossais!*" "I am a Scotchman!" an avowal which gained me the kindly looks of the women and the good will of the men; one evidence, and there are many besides, that the kindly feelings which subsisted in the olden time between the French and Scotch, when there was much correspondence and many alliances between the two countries, still lingers in France.

I don't know but I was as much pleased to hear my

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native tongue, or something like it, spoken by the clerk in the coach-office at Brussels on our arrival there. I had taken an outside seat for the whole distance from Paris; but, with rain pouring on, and the sharp corner of a trunk among the luggage sticking into my back almost the whole first night, I resolved to go inside the second one, paying the difference when we reached our journey's end. For this purpose I gave the clerk at Brussels a gold coin; and, when he went to count me out the change in Belgian money, I was as much surprised as pleased to hear him, in what seemed pure Brechin Doric, run on somewhat thus—"*Saxteen, seeventeen, aughteen.*"

I saw as much of Brussels as to form a very low opinion of its morality—the door of the hotel where I passed some two or three days being beset by touters, or panderers to infamous houses with offer of their services; one of whom was so persevering that I only got rid of the infamous scoundrel by threats of a good thrashing. I have met with the same thing in Naples, where the flower-girls, as well as men, are not ashamed to engage in the same infamous service.

There is nothing like these things in this country, with all our faults. One doubts whether there remains any resurrection for nations so long dead and lying in such loathsome corruption. It seems as if these countries could not be purified but by the fires of Sodom. There is one living race, however, that, so far as my observation goes, does exceed them in unblushing wickedness: sad to say, these are the descendants of God's ancient people:

—such scenes as we saw in open day passing through the Ghetto at Rome, and the Jewish quarter at Frankfort, reminding me of the question, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?" and of our Lord's address to Capernaum, "And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell."

As Waterloo still bulked largely in the public eye—it being about twelve years since that great and decisive battle was fought—I left Brussels to visit the field. The ditches were strewn in many places with the withering skulls and bones of the dead, the ploughshare each spring violating their shallow graves. I met a peasant there, who had been pressed into the service of the French army, his employment during the long protracted fight being to prepare refreshments for Napoleon's troops. How he managed that I don't know, for he seems on the occasion, no great wonder, to have lost his head; all the account he could give me of the battle being this, "It was just a perpetual roar of cannon, mingled with the hurras of the British and the *Vive l'Empereur* of the French."

From Brussels I passed on through Ghent and Bruges to Ostend, where, after a weary delay of two days, I embarked on board a steamer to London; and, after passing some weeks there, dropped down the Thames in a smack bound for Dundee. We passed the bodies of some pirates hanging in chains, and dropping in pieces on the banks of the river; and being more than once

becalmed, spent a whole week in the voyage to Dundee. So slowly, compared with its speed in these days of railroads ashore, and steamers at sea, did the world then move on.

Next day I returned to my home and native town, through a kind providence, safe and sound. I thought myself "no small drink," as people say; for at that time —with the exception of one old soldier here and another there—a man who had crossed the Channel, still more one who had been in Paris, to say nothing of studies pursued at the celebrated Sorbonne, was a *rara avis in terris.*

INCHGRUNDLE, LOCHLEE: *June*, 1872.

I had good hopes of "obtaining a living," as they say, on my return home, through the influence of the Hon. William Maule, afterwards Lord Panmure, and father of the present Earl of Dalhousie.

One of Lord Wharncliffe's churches, that of Eassie, in my native county, had fallen vacant; and Mr. Maule had what he considered Lord Wharncliffe's promise that I should be presented to the charge. But, having by this time identified myself with the evangelical and popular party in the Church of Scotland, and become a "High Flyer," in the language of the day, the cup was again dashed from my lips. Some said my disappointment was due to Lord Wharncliffe confounding the High party in the Church of Scotland with those who held, in opposition to his views, High Church principles in the Church of England; but I believed nothing of the kind, and

having no doubt that I was driven out to sea again through the influence of the Moderate leaders with Lord Wharncliffe, a sense of personal wrong intensified my antipathy to their tyrannical policy, and my resolution, on obtaining a charge, and, with that, a seat in the Church Courts, to do my utmost to hurl them from power.

And yet, in looking back on the way God led me in the wilderness, I see how much better He chose for me than I would have chosen for myself. In various ways, though at the time not joyous but grievous, these disappointments wrought out good fruit; besides, while the first saved me from a sphere where I should have been probably dwarfed and stunted for life by overmuch work, the second kept me out of a Presbytery, where there was little spiritual life among the ministers, and much drinking and carelessness among the leading farmers of the district. It was not a safe atmosphere to breathe, and I was safer out of it, and have lived to see that I had no more ground than Jacob to say, "all these things are against me!"

But at the time, I felt keenly what Edward Irving, who had his own experience of it, called "the miserable estate of a preacher." I could only get into a charge by some of the ministers dying, whose successors Mr. Maule had, as patron, or through his influence with the patron, the power of appointing; and where, as in my case, these ministers were one's own friends, it became doubly painful to "wait for dead men's shoes." While

matrons turned to the newspaper for the list of births, and spinsters to the list of marriages, it was the list of deaths the poor preacher first scanned on his outlook for vacant charges.

Not requiring to teach, either publicly or privately, for my bread, I had no fixed employment, and was about to escape from the tedium and ennui of my position by going abroad to Germany the following winter, as I had gone to Paris the former one, when an event occurred which, for the time being, though in a different sphere from that of the Church, called me into active life.

The Bank agency which, under the name of David Guthrie and Sons, has been in my family and in the town of Brechin for more now than sixty years, was at that time managed by my elder brother, Bailie John Guthrie, who, cut down in the prime of life by a sudden illness, left one son, David, then little beyond boyhood. In a few years, could the bank be held on for that time, he would, with the counsel of his uncles, all engaged in businesses of their own, be old enough to succeed his father.

To accomplish this, an important object, it was proposed that I should abandon my plan of going to a German university and enter the bank, filling my dead brother's place till his son was ready to take the helm, or till I was presented to a church and the charge of a parish. This I did;* passing two busy, and not lost,

* March, 1828.

years in that employment. That, in point of fact, was not the least valuable part of my training and education. I became in this way conversant both with mercantile and agricultural affairs; and those who, both in the country and the town, afterwards became my people, did not respect me the less when they found their minister was something else than "a fine bodie," who knew no more about the affairs, and hopes, and disappointments, and temptations, and trials of men engaged in the business of the world than any old wife, or the "man in the moon."

It is not desirable, certainly, that the people should find the preacher tripping as thus befell a clever man of my acquaintance. This Doctor of Divinity went to preach in Glenisla for Mr. Martin, who related the following incident to me. The Doctor thought that, Glenisla being a pastoral parish, the twenty-third Psalm would form a peculiarly suitable subject; and from that, as he was very capable of doing, he delivered an admirable discourse. But there was a "dead fly" in the apothecary's ointment that marred the sermon and lowered the man. Ignorant of the fact that sheep in our moist climate, and amid the dew-covered and green, succulent herbage, are independent of streams, and indeed seldom drink water but when sick, he expatiated, as he spoke of "the still waters," on the importance of water to the flocks—a blunder and display of ignorance the stupidest discovered; and, as they lingered to light their pipes by the church-door, he had the mortification on

retiring to hear himself and his sermon treated with contempt—one shepherd saying to another: "Puir bodie! Heard ye ever the like o' yon aboot the sheep drinkin'?"

In contrast to this, I remember how I rose visibly in the respect of some farmers and men of business whom I met the day after a large sale of cattle fed on distillery refuse had taken place. "What did they bring?" said one of them to me, expecting to trot out my ignorance, to his own amusement and that of the company. "Well," I said, "I don't know till I see a fair specimen of the stock, and know the number knocked down to the hammer." So, amused that I, a minister of a city charge, would venture even a guess on such a matter, they conducted me to a straw-yard, where two or three of the cattle, fair specimens of the herd, still remained. "Now," I said, after looking at the beasts, "give me the number sold;" and when, after some mental arithmetic, I gave £9,500 as the sum, which was within a few hundreds of the money actually realised, how they did stare with astonishment, carrying away with them more respect for clergymen than some of them had entertained before.

My people at Arbirlot, too, were all the better of the knowledge of business I had acquired in the bank, as I had not been long there when I established a savings-bank in that country parish, getting two or three of the principal farmers to be the trustees, along with myself. I was the entire manager; giving out money only on Saturday evening, the regular time for its transactions, and that only on a week or fortnight's notice—but re-

ceiving it in the shape of a shilling, the lowest deposit, at any time and any day, Sunday of course excepted. This bank, as I shall show when I come, in the course of my story, to my ministry at Arbirlot, was a great success; training up the young to those habits of foresight, self-denial, and prudence, which are handmaids to virtue, and, though not religion, are nearly allied to it.

Some few weeks before I became a banker, as above related, I had agreed to preach as assistant to Mr. Hannah, the minister of Stracathro. This parish lay in the neighbourhood of Brechin; it was in its churchyard that Balliol did homage to Edward for the crown of Scotland. Mr. Hannah was evidently a dying man when I entered on this duty; nor shall I ever forget the scene at family worship on the evening of the last Sunday I preached, and the last day but one of his life. A very good man, but of peculiar and rather obstinate temper, he would not be persuaded to retire to bed, nor allow me to conduct the service. Wasted to a skeleton, and of a most cadaverous aspect—his skin never clear indeed, but now the colour of a corpse—he sat by the fire, propped up by cushions in his chair. His niece, who was his housekeeper, placed the book in his hands; they trembled like an aspen leaf as he turned the leaves; and when he had chosen the subject of an evening hymn, I have seldom been impressed with more awe and solemnity than when, pausing for breath almost between every word, in tremulous, broken tones, he gave out these ap-

propriate, and, as they might in the circumstances be called, prophetic words—

> "You now must hear my voice no more;
> My Father calls me home."

I had supplied his pulpit for five Sabbaths before his death; and for this service, as he left neither widow nor children, never having been married, I made and received the usual charge of a guinea per Sunday; and until, some two years afterwards, I was settled in the parish of Arbirlot, these five guineas were all the remuneration I ever earned, though, as a licentiate or preacher, I had been five years what might be called a journeyman, and as an apprentice, so to speak, had spent ten years at the university.

During the time I was in the bank, I preached three or four times a year, and by this, as was my wish, the public knew I had not abandoned my original profession; nor did I find any inconvenience in this, unless when, as sometimes happened, I saw a man sitting before me to whom I had but the day before, perhaps, refused to discount a bill—grant him "accommodation," as it was called. Then I felt I was not addressing an unprejudiced hearer, or one disposed to receive the truth from my lips.

The unsuitableness, let me here remark, of some of the old arrangements connected with the administration of the Lord's Supper in Scotland was one among many lessons I learned in the bank. At the sound of the bell

on the Saturday afternoon, we had just time to lock up bills, notes, gold, and silver, and, turning the key in the door, rush away to church; and at the close of the service we had to hurry back, to plunge, at a leap, over head and ears into the whirlpool of such secular concerns; and on the Monday succeeding the Communion Sabbath, the same *hurry scurry* had to be gone through. If ministers were less shut up in their own shells, and had more common sense and knowledge of the world, they would cling less tenaciously to old forms, suitable enough to bygone but not to the present times. Who has not felt that we cannot dash with profit, all of a sudden, from secular to spiritual themes; and that our minds, like a musical instrument whose strings have been relaxed, require time and pains to be tuned for engaging with advantage in worship and other spiritual services?

I spent, on the whole, a happy time in the bank, never feeling its responsibilities very heavy but once, when a circumstance occurred that shows into what mistakes we may fall, and how careful we should be not to rush rashly into unfavourable conclusions.

Detained in the office till midnight on one occasion, by press of business, I was making my way to the cottage where we spent the summer-time, some two miles out of town. It was an exceedingly dark night, but I was thinking of no danger, though I carried the bank keys with me, when I heard footsteps behind. Not seeking a companion in the circumstances, I put on steam to

shoot ahead, and became a little anxious on finding, that as I quickened my pace, so did he who followed me. I tried another dodge to shake him off—crossing first to one side of the road, then to the other; so did the feet behind, and which were by this time almost on my heels. Seriously alarmed now—knowing what I carried, and dreading the blow of a bludgeon from behind—I opened my knife, having no other weapon of offence or defence, and suddenly wheeling round, to see dimly the figure of a man close on me, I faced him, demanding, in a loud resolute voice, "Who's there?" "Then it *is* you, Maister Guthrie!" was the answer; "I was sure it was your figure on the brae between me and the sky, an' I did my very best to mak' up to you. Ye see, I've forty pound on me, and it's no' chancy to be travelling alane at this hour wi' a' that siller!"

This mistake of mine reminds me of one equally great, if not greater, into which the zeal of an ardent Methodist once led an equally honest traveller. The worthy Methodist, burning with desire to do good and save souls, seeing a man on the road before him, hastened to make up to him, that he might deal with him about his soul. Ignorant of these good intentions, the other, taking him for a footpad, did all he could to throw him out, but in vain. At last and at length the Methodist runs him down, confirming his worst fears—as they now stood face to face—with the startling question, "Are you prepared to die?" So the worthy Wesleyan was in the

habit of dealing with people, going thus right and at once to the mark. But, at this awful question, down goes the poor man on his knees, to offer the other all his money if he will but spare his life, happy, as the supposed footpad raised him, to find out his mistake.

Part IV.

LIFE AT ARBIRLOT.

1830—1837.

In the autumn of 1829, the parish of Arbirlot became vacant by the death of Mr. Watson. Though the patronage of this and other church livings in the county of Forfar had been forfeited to the Crown when the then Earl of Panmure went out to support the cause of the Pretender, in the Rebellion of 1715, the Honourable William Maule, my patron, was sole heritor of the parish; and—as it had been for many years the practice of the Crown to appoint to any of their vacant churches the man recommended by the sole heritor or majority of heritors—I seemed to have reached land at last. Mr. Maule lost no time in sending off his recommendation, and I expected that I should have the pleasure in a few days of reading my name in the *Gazette*.

But days came, and weeks came, and even months came, but no answer from the Crown. Mr. Maule would not renew his application; nor, being politically opposed to the Tory Ministry, thereby seem to ask any favour at their hands.

The leaders of the Moderate party in the Church had

much influence with the Government, and through it and private patrons were using all means, fair and foul, to check the tide which was rising in favour of the evangelical or popular party. Dr. Andrew Thomson, the Knox and Luther of his day, and by far the most formidable of all their opponents, was already, in advance of his party, thundering with his battle-axe at the gate of patronage, while Chalmers lent to the Evangelical section of the Church all the influence of his splendid eloquence and illustrious name. The Moderates were astute enough to see their danger and the probability that the same cry for the rights of the people which, then rising from all parts of the land, issued in the Reform Bill, would be taken up within the Church, and be there the death-knell of Moderatism, as it was destined to be of Toryism in the State. The doom they could not finally avert, they might postpone by maintaining their majority in the Church Courts—an end they sought to accomplish by inducing patrons to appoint no Evangelical to a vacant charge.

In these circumstances, I had reason to dread the worst from the delay. Any way, "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." I had gone through a more costly and complete preparation for the ministry than most men. I was not open to the charge of vanity in concluding that I was as well qualified as most, and better than many, who had got in while I was left out in the cold. I had waited by the pool for five long, weary years; and all this was so disheartening and mortifying, that, but for God's sustaining hand and good providence, I had aban-

doned the profession in disgust—resolved that, if I could not enter the Church without forfeiting my independence and sacrificing my principles for a living, I would seek to support myself and serve God in some secular pursuit.

After about five months of this painful suspense, a letter came from Brechin Castle, not containing my fate, however, but merely that Mr. Maule had got an answer from Government, and wished to see me. Very tantalising! Was the answer favourable or otherwise? that was the question. I had reached the turning point of my life; and I never, even yet, walk along the avenue of beech trees that leads to the Castle door without recalling my feelings that February morning I went there, in blank uncertainty, to learn my fate. Hope, however, prevailed over fear. Mr. Maule was a man of great good sense, and I concluded that, being such, if the answer had been unfavourable, he would have given it by letter rather than by word of mouth.

And I was right. The answer was favourable—only there was an official blunder in it which he wished to explain, and which, saving me from many a joke, he lost no time in getting corrected before the appointment was gazetted. It bore that His Majesty had ordered a presentation to the parish of Arbirlot to be drawn out "in favour of the Rev. Richard Watson, in room of the Rev. Thomas Guthrie, deceased!"

The long delay was due to what the Ministry wished to keep concealed—the illness of the King (George IV.) The warrant for issuing the presentation required to be

signed by the King's own hand, and months had passed during which he had not been able to transact any business.

On leaving Mr. Maule I felt relieved of a great burden, not sure, as people say, whether my head or heels were uppermost. I was thankful to God; happy, not only for my own sake, but for the happiness I knew I was carrying to her to whom I had been engaged for some years, and to whom I was married five months after entering on my charge, as well as to my mother and family, waiting at home in anxiety for the result.

On the presentation in my favour by the Crown being laid before the Presbytery of Arbroath, I was taken on "trials" by them—these being, in all cases where the presentee was not suspected of ignorance or heterodoxy, very much of a form. I was also, after preaching before them, "called" by the people; this call—ever since the days when Moderatism began its reign—being very much of a sham too; as it continued to be till the "Veto Act" was passed, which, putting new life into this old dead form, prevented any man being thrust on an unwilling people.

These preliminaries being gone through, I was ordained the minister, and inducted into the living of Arbirlot in May,* 1830, at an expense to myself of some sixty pounds. The fees to the Crown cost about thirty pounds, and the other thirty pounds or more went to defray the cost of a dinner which I gave that day in a hotel in

* 13th May.

Arbroath to the members of the Presbytery, some of my own private friends, and the farmers of the parish of Arbirlot.

Happily, now-a-days, these old convivial customs are, to a large extent, abandoned. They not unfrequently led to excesses unseemly at any time, and, on such solemn occasions as an ordination, not unseemly only, but revolting. On this occasion one or two of the farmers were rather uproarious, and one minister got drunk before leaving the table. Some years thereafter, he was tried by the Presbytery, and deposed by the General Assembly for drunkenness and other crimes.

Nor, I may here state, was that an easy matter in those days. The Moderate party raised every obstruction to Church discipline, using all legal quirks and quibbles and their unscrupulous majorities to shield the worst offenders. The person I refer to was notorious both for intemperance and lying: yet, not reckoning his expenses, it cost us, the ministers of the Presbytery, about £500, and two whole years, before we got him deposed.

Looking more with pity on the misery to which deposition reduces a minister's wife and children than to the interests of religion and the Church, in such cases people often prove slow and unwilling witnesses; and, though not prepared to swear to a lie, will so hedge and dodge about, that it is difficult to get at the truth. After we had drawn out of them proof in the case of this man that on such and such an occasion he talked arrant nonsense in the pulpit, or reeled in gait, and

stuttered in speech—exhibited, in fact, all the marks of drunkenness—on being asked whether he was drunk, they slipped out of our fingers like an eel; their answer was this, "We'll no' say, far less swear, he was drunk; he might have been but sick, or something of that kind; wha kens?"

We were thus losing our case, till we fell on another way of getting at the truth. This was by asking them, not whether he was drunk, but whether, without saying for a fact that he was so, it was their impression at the time that he was drunk. Into this net most of them walked; but one, a strong partisan of the offending minister, was clever enough to see that, if he gave honestly the impression made on him by his minister's appearance and language in the pulpit on a particular Sunday evening, he would damage the cause he wished to defend.

Besides other proofs of drunkenness, having drawn this out of him, that the minister, on that occasion, as he lolled over the side of the pulpit—being, in fact, unable to stand upright—said that he loved his people so much that he would carry them all to heaven on his back, I asked him, "Now, John, when you heard him say so, what impression did so strange a speech make on you?"

Others, to the same question, as unwilling witnesses as John, had already said that, though they would not say he was drunk at the time, they certainly thought so.

But John showed himself equal to the occasion.

"Weel," he replied, "Maister Guthrie, I'll just tell

you what I thought. There was a great fat wife, you see, sitting in the seat before me, and thinks I, 'My lad, if you set off to the kingdom of heaven with that wife on your back, my certie, you'll no be back for the rest o' us in a hurry!"

The clever escape, the ludicrous picture presented of —— on his way through the sky with this enormous wife seated on his back, and the serious air with which John delivered himself of his reply, were irresistible. We were all convulsed with laughter, the culprit himself as much as any of us. So John left the field with flying colours.

But let us leave this to return to Arbirlot. Its shores washed by the German Ocean, it lies on the sea coast, reaching almost to the town of Arbroath. In front of it, some twelve miles out to sea, stands the Bell Rock Lighthouse; and to this position of my first parish, where for seven years I was familiar with the great ocean in all its ever-changing phases, is due, no doubt, the numerous allusions to it which occur in my sermons and speeches.

My predecessor in that parish was a good and able man. He used to boast of having challenged John Wesley, on his visit to Scotland, to a public passage-at-arms in the town of Arbroath, and tell, with no small pride, how Wesley refused the challenge; which, however, he might have had good reasons for doing, other than the fear of Richard Watson.

Like many other ministers of his time, my predecessor

acquired penurious habits, and allowed them, I fear, to obtain too great a mastery over him. There was current a story of another parsimonious minister who evaded discovery by an uncommonly clever manœuvre. When working one day in his garden, or glebe, in his ordinary beggar-like attire, he was alarmed to see the carriage of his patron, the proprietor of the parish, whirling rapidly along the road to his manse. It was too late to attempt a retreat, and get himself put in decent order to receive "my lord." To retreat was impossible: to remain where and as he was,—to be shamed and disgraced. With a promptitude seldom or never surpassed, he stuck his battered hat down on his shoulders, drew up his hands into the sleeves of his ragged coat, stuck out his arms at an acute angle, planted his legs far apart, and, throwing rigidity into all his form, stood there in the potato-ground, the very *beau ideal* of what in England is called a "scare-crow," in Scotland a "potato-bogle"—never suspected by the visitors as they drove up to the front entrance, while he made for the back-door to don his Sunday garb.

Another of whom I have heard, standing one evening on the bridge near his manse, was accosted by a mendicant, who, judging the minister by his dress to be one of the fraternity, and wishing for information (being himself a stranger in that part of the country), said, "And whaur are *ye* to put up the nicht, man?"

A good deal may be said in palliation of the penurious habits of ministers—as much, at any rate, as should have

made others more lenient to their faults. To get through eight long years of preparatory training, many of them, being poor men's sons, had to learn habits of stern economy; on getting a church they had to borrow money to furnish the manse after the plainest fashion; and these loans they had no means of paying like honest men without looking after every penny, and for years spending none they could save. So this vice in their case had its root in a virtue, in the honourable desire to "owe no man anything,"—a circumstance forgotten by those who would sneer at the penuriousness of a man who honourably paid all his debts, while, regardless of the losses of tradesmen and shop-keepers, they paid theirs, perhaps, with one shilling in the pound. To be too saving of one's own money is bad, but to waste other people's is worse.

And whatever may have been my predecessor's faults in respect of parsimony, and however much these were to be regretted as impairing his usefulness, he was a sound and able preacher; and of this I enjoyed the benefit, finding in the people of Arbirlot a congregation of intelligent and most attentive hearers. The tree is known by its fruit—the preacher by his people; for whenever I have found it difficult to awaken and arrest the attention of an audience lolling at their ease, and wearing in their faces an air of dull indifference, I did not need any one to tell me that their usual Sabbaths were a weariness—their minister a poor, uninteresting preacher. And much have they to answer for, who, devoting too little time and

labour to their sermons, indulge their taste, some for literature, and others for laziness, at the expense of their people's souls.

So soon as I was presented to the charge of Arbirlot, Mr. Maule, who was very kind, wished me to go and see the manse, offering to build me a new one. I found it in a very ricketty and dilapidated condition—nor much wonder; for, though the best in all the country-side when built, during the incumbency of a Sir Thomas Preston, a special friend and favourite of the then proprietor of Kelly Castle and the parish, it was at the time of my settlement close on a hundred years old. The floor of the small parlour formed an inclined plane, having sunk so much on one side, that when a ball was placed on the table it rolled off. The dining-room, which, unless when we had company, was only used as my study, was so open through many a cranny to the winds of heaven, that the carpet in stormy weather rose and fell and flapped like a ship's sail. Off it, was a sleeping closet—our best bedroom—where my father-in-law, Mr. Burns, one of the ministers of Brechin, and his wife, were wakened one morning by a shower-bath; and wondering, as well they might, looked up to see the top of the bed bellied out with the rain that had floated the garret, and found its way through rotten roof and broken slates to them! The kitchen had no other ceiling but the floor of our bedroom that stood over it, which saved a bell, and, as the planks were thin with washing and age, permitted *viva voce* communication between us and the servants; and I

well remember how, in the dark winter mornings, we used to hear the click of the flint and steel as the kitchen-maid struck the sparks into the tinder-box, and kindled thus a match dipped in sulphur, or *spunk*, as it was called —a primitive, and, then, the only method of producing fire, for the boxes of Bryant and May and all other match makers had no more existence in those days than locomotives, photographs, or telegraphs.

In this manse, which, by the way, was the only one in the kingdom that had the baronial privilege of a dovecot attached to it—a special favour granted to Sir Thomas Preston, and, whatever it might have been to him, of little use to me, the place being in my day a favourite hunting-ground of rats—in this old ricketty house I abode five years. The spiritual interests of the people were of more consequence than the material comforts of the minister. I was made for Arbirlot, not Arbirlot for me; and so, on finding that there was great need of a new church, on condition that it was built, I waived my right to a new manse, or rather, declined Mr. Maule's unsolicited offer of one.

The church was an old building, the resort of bats, as the pigeon-house was of rats. There was nothing but an earthen floor below, and no ceiling above, where, on beginning the services on a winter Sunday, I have often seen the snow, that had blown through the slating, lying white on the rafters, waiting to tumble down on the heads of the people, when loosened by their breath. As to stoves, they were never thought of—the pulpit had to

keep the people warm. The church, besides, was found to be too small for the congregation; so we set about it, and got up what was practically a new church, making a collection on the day of its opening for a parochial library; and—however little £15 be thought of now, when the Free Church alone raises every year, by the voluntary contributions of her people, nearly half a million of money—in those days, when people were accustomed to give nothing beyond a halfpenny, and the more generous part of them a whole penny, to the ladle, a collection of £15 was, if not a world's, at least a parish wonder. It was thought an extraordinary effort, and left the good people in a state of prostration, exhausted and astonished at their own liberality.

The rose has thorns; and it is not often in Providence but some ill is linked to good. So happened it here. This new church set me and a number of my farmers at loggerheads; and that fell out thus:—

The old church at first had been built, but not seated, by the proprietor. The tenants put in a number of the pews and *faulds*, as the square seats were called, at their own cost. The expense of this was paid by the incoming to the outgoing tenant. When I went to Arbirlot, I found the farmers who did not require them for their cottars and servants—as in time and under an improved system of husbandry the farms had become less populous—letting their seats to the inhabitants of the villages and hamlets that had sprung up in the parish and charging the poor people, in the shape of seat-rent, a most exor-

bitant interest—100 per cent. on their outlay. When the church was rebuilt, we invested some hundreds of pounds, the property of the Kirk Session, in erecting a part of the building, where the pews would yield a moderate fair interest of some 5 or 10 per cent. on our outlay. This, with the additional accommodation provided, brought down the value of the farmers' seats—there was an end to the oppression of the people, and their making a gain of godliness.

But what a storm got up, and blew for days and weeks round my devoted head! reminding me of the saying of a worthy old woman, who, on hearing a talk of my popularity when first I went to Arbirlot, delivered herself of these words: "You are a' speakin' of the fine young man you have just gotten for a minister; but if he is faithful to his Master, be sure he'll have a' the blackguards of the parish on his tap in three weeks!" This did happen afterwards, indeed; for some two or three of the greatest blackguards in the parish did their utmost—though they failed—to blast my happiness and usefulness.

These farmers were, as the world goes, respectable enough men; nor were they all implicated in this mean transaction. More than once the common people came to me under the cloud of night to express their hopes and anxious wishes that I would stand to my position and by them, which, unpleasant as it was, I did. The farmers threatened to give nothing to the poor's fund at the Sabbath-day collections, and some carried their threat into execution—one in particular, a rich man, who was

accustomed to rule the roast, and was mightily indignant I would not take the law from his mouth. But, backed by the factor, and having my elders well in hand, we did not budge a foot, and the storm by-and-by subsided, and the result was a happy one. What threatened at first to destroy, in the end established my position and influence in the parish.

Physically, mentally, morally, religiously, my parishioners were, take them overhead, a remarkably well-conditioned people; and though the glebe was small, and the stipend by no means large, being on an average of years but £197, yet on the whole, and among such a people, I might thank God, and say that the lines had fallen to me in pleasant places. Including a portion of another parish practically attached to mine, the population amounted to about one thousand souls, and during the whole seven years I spent there, none of them were ever, so far as I can recollect, charged with any criminal offence.

There was, indeed, a case of murder that filled us all with horror, but though committed on one who had been a native of Arbirlot—whose churchyard, in her case, had to give up its dead—it was neither committed in the parish nor by a parishioner. I relate it as an illustration of the words, "Be sure your sin will find you out:"—

Sitting one bright summer day in my manse, a criminal officer was introduced into my room. He presented an order from the sheriff of the county, requiring me, as guardian of the churchyard, to allow the autho-

rities to exhume the body of a woman that had been buried there some six weeks before; her husband had been apprehended on suspicion of having murdered her, and was already lodged in the prison of Arbroath. Of course I had to obey; and on going to the churchyard, found some criminal officers who had come to exhume the body, and medical men who had come to examine it, standing by her grave. The news by this time had spread, gathering the villagers, who stood afar off, struck with horror at the crime; but also so shocked at this violation of a grave, and at the use to be made of their bowls and platters, that I could not get one of them to lend any for the service of the dissection. The manse had to furnish them; and it was after no small trouble that I got one of the villagers to give us the use of an old disused barn, where the corpse was carried for the *post-mortem* examination. "Wheresoever the carcase is," says the Bible, "there will the eagles be gathered together;" and I remember how I was reminded of these words when, the coffin being raised and laid on a flat tombstone, the lid was raised, displaying the body in its shroud, already stained with corruption. All of a sudden a cloud of bluebottle flies buzzed over us, and settled down in black swarms on the body.

On its being carried into the barn, the doctors proceeded to their work, examining the various organs—the brain among others. To reach it they had to chisel off the skull-cap, and I think the most horrible sight I ever saw was then and there, when, as I stood at her feet,

every blow of the chisel made the corpse appear as if nodding to me. On some of the viscera being opened, they showed the clearest traces of death brought about by arsenic—a dangerous poison to the murderer as well as to his victim, since (while many other poisons kill, and in a few days or even hours leave no evidence behind them to illustrate the saying, "Murder will out") this preserves for a long time the tissues it comes in contact with from decay and corruption, and, as in this case, rises as it were from the grave to appear in court, and to be a witness against the murderer. The doctors having bottled up evidence enough to hang the murderer, we gave the body back to the grave, and they took themselves off, to find, however, on reaching the town, that the ruffian, foreseeing that his sin would find him out, when he heard that they were off to raise and examine the body, had cheated the gallows. Poor wretch! he had hanged himself in his cell.

In this population of a thousand parishioners—to return to them—there were three units that stood out in a marked way from the rest. There was one Dissenter, a very worthy man, a tailor, who travelled every Sunday, fair weather and foul, ten or twelve miles in order that he might worship with his own small sect of Old Light Seceders in Arbroath; there was one man who could not read, but he was an interloper, and not a native; and there was one man who did not attend church on the Lord's Day, and he was crazy. The first was much respected; the second was regarded as a curiosity,

people pointing him out as the man who could not read; and the third nobody heeded, far less followed his example.

On the other hand, we had two or three as bad, immoral fellows as were to be found in the whole country, yet they were never out of church.

I remember with no small satisfaction how I took the wind out of the sails of one of these, in an attempt he made to mortify me, at the very time I was showing him kind and Christian attentions. He had been very ill, and was prepared to express his gratitude for my attentions on a day when I went to visit him, and when he expected me to do so. At that time the Voluntary Controversy was raging throughout the country, and a fierce and scurrilous attack had been made on me by a low pamphleteer in Arbroath. With this, which I had not seen but had heard of, this "fellow of the baser sort" had furnished himself, that he might annoy and mortify his minister by getting me to take it home and read it. So, no sooner had I finished praying with him, and was on my feet to go, than he said, "Oh, Mr. Guthrie, here is a pamphlet about you!" I saw malignity gleaming in his eyes, and, suspecting the truth, turned round to ask, "Is it for or against me?" "Oh," he replied, "against you;" and never did a man look more mortified, more chopfallen than he, on my saying, with a merry laugh, "Ah, well, you may keep it; had it been for me, I would have read it. I never read anything that is against me!"

If I ever knew any who might be considered "reprobates," this man and his associates were so; to a large extent answering to the character of those Paul describes at the close of the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient: being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness: full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity: whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents: without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

These, the black sheep of my flock, had no influence in my parish; so that, though they hated me with a perfect hatred—hating me, however, without a cause, save this, that they hated God and all in his service—their antagonism cost me no trouble.

It was otherwise with one of the principal farmers of the parish, on an occasion when I had to contend in defence of the Sabbath and the rights of his underlings. He was not a communicant, yet was never absent from church; and being a man of wealth, of gentlemanly bearing, of political and social influence, with large stores of knowledge and a cultivated mind, he stood in many respects the chief man in the parish. He was what I fancy would now-a-days be called very "Broad" in his views; but this advantage I derived from that, and his presence in church—I was made more careful than I

might otherwise have been in my preparations for the pulpit, that I might win him over to the truth, and give him no reason for despising either it or its preachers.

Well, there came with the harvest season, a year or two before I left Arbirlot, the most unpropitious weather. It rained, and rained, and rained; till, in the fields where the stooks stood green atop, the farmers thought they saw ruin staring them in the face. There was yet no serious damage done; but when all were dreading another week of such weather to realise the worst apprehensions, the clouds began to break up on a Friday. With the barometer and the wind, the hopes of the farmers rose on Saturday; and on Sunday, during which the favourable change continued, our people came to church to thank Him who holds the wind in His fist and makes the clouds His chariot. All prepared on Monday morning, and by the *skreigh o' day*, to be at work in the fields.

Monday came; and, ere the day was half over, the report had flown through the parish that the person I have referred to, on leaving church, had gathered his farm servants and cottars, and laid his orders on them to turn out to the fields, and spend the rest of the Lord's day in gathering in the harvest. Remonstrance was in vain. What were their consciences and religious scruples to him? It was at their peril they would refuse. Taken unawares, in the hands of a man who, otherwise kind enough, was an autocrat in his way, and had the power, as they knew, of turning them at the time out of house and holding, the poor people, though with great

reluctance, and with hearts and consciences ill at ease, yielded.

He himself, not being a member of the church, was beyond our authority. Not so his cottars and servants, who, being communicants, were amenable to discipline. We summoned them before the Kirk Session, where they all appeared to express great regret; and, as we knew how they had been concussed, we recommended the Presbytery, to whom we had reported the case, to deal very leniently and tenderly with them.

But how this petty tyrant raged and fumed! talking tall, big words about the liberty of the subject, and ending personal attacks on me by a challenge to defend myself and my Sabbatarian views at a public meeting in the church. In reply, I offered him an opportunity of discussing the subject at a meeting in my manse; and, for his sake as well as that of religion, keeping my temper, in addition invited him to breakfast on the occasion. He declined the breakfast, but accepted the meeting. I never prepared for any encounter by so much prayer and pains, nor came off—as I believed—after some two hours' discussion, with such success; so knocking the ground from below his feet, so demonstrating his gross ignorance of Scripture, and tearing to shreds and tatters the few miserable arguments he had to produce, that my heart relented, and I could not but feel sorry for the man. He made great efforts, after I left, to get the Presbytery to consent that all record of the case should be expunged from the books of the Kirk Session

of Arbirlot, which they, approving as much of what I, as they disapproved of what he had done, refused to comply with.

To end this story of the battle for the Sabbath, I may add—first, no such breach of the Lord's day had ever been before committed by any farmer in Arbirlot but by this man's father; and secondly, that, even in a material point of view, he gained nothing, or worse than nothing, by it. Other farmers waited till Monday before they lifted stook or sheaf; and when they were stacking their crops in good condition, his barn-yard was smoking like a kiln. His grain had not been ready for carrying on the Sunday, and every stack built on that day *heated*, as they call it, and had to be taken down on Monday; so this oppression of his underlings and breach of the Sabbath-day cost him, besides loss of character, loss of labour, of time, and grain. The people, as well they might, were much struck with this: his sin had found him out, and his neighbours who feared God, respected His law, and trusted in the old promise of harvest as well as seed-time, saw in the sound condition of their stacks and stack-yards how, in the words of Scripture, "He that believeth shall not make haste."

Most of the farms in my parish were of moderate size, and their tenants, in consequence, in the happy condition of having neither poverty nor riches. Numbers were what are called "life-rents," where the tenant held the farm for his life, and, being old *tacks*, or leases, paid a very low rent, not half, or perhaps the third, of a fair charge per

acre. In these cases the result was the opposite of what many might expect. Those who sat on such easy terms were in many instances the least easy in their circumstances; while those farmers flourished who paid a good, fair rent to the landlord. They who should have been rich became bankrupts—their fields worse cultivated, and their character, on the whole, less respectable than that of their apparently less fortunate neighbours. Nor was this difficult to explain. Their too easy circumstances bred idleness, and the idleness bred dissipation; and from these results I learned that he is the best landlord who exacts such rents as require his tenants to be "diligent in business," self-denying, industrious, and economical.

Though there were some black sheep among them—one a notorious libertine, and two or three who made occasionally a too free use of the bottle—the farmers on the whole were a highly respectable class of men. There were some curious studies of human nature among their number. One, a tall, powerful man, fit to stand for bodily bulk foremost in the rank of grenadiers, was shy to a disease. He always managed to be away at the time of my ministerial visitations, and I don't think I exchanged seven words with him during my seven years at Arbirlot, beyond a brief salutation when we happened, very much to his discomfort, to encounter each other on the road. Then I had a funny pleasure in making up to him, and compelling him, as he blushed to the ears, to speak. I have seen him, when he descried me approaching, go off at a tangent, clear dyke or ditch by help of his long

legs, to cut across the fields; and when there was no escape, I never expected to my question, "How do you do, Mr. ——?" anything beyond this (discharged like a bolt from a crossbow, and no sooner discharged than he took to his heels, and was off like the bolt), "Brawlie, thank ye; hoo are ye yersel?"

Another was a very odd character, who might have formed a very fine one—with some oddities, no doubt—and instead of becoming bankrupt, might have become the wealthiest man in the parish had he never touched drink. I wish all men were abstainers; but they specially need to be so who, like my poor friend, are of a highly excitable temperament. His thermometer stood always at the boiling point; and as the least extra stimulant made him, so to speak, boil over, he said and did all manner of absurd and often outrageous things. Once he became so furious and insolent that I had to order him out of the manse; and yet he was a kind, generous creature, with a considerable dash of what was good. He died as he lived, a most curious mixture of benevolence and folly. The lawyer who was writing to his dictation, having written down legacies of five hundred pounds to this person, and a thousand pounds to that, and so on, at length laid down his pen, saying, "But, Mr. ——, I don't believe you have all that money to leave."

"Oh," was the reply, "I ken that as well as you, but I just want to show them my good will!"

Much is to be allowed for in such cases, nor are they to be judged of by the common standard we apply to

others. Ignorant of those constitutional and physical peculiarities that have much to do in moulding the life and character, we often judge harshly and wrongously; and there is reason, as well as charity, in believing that many will have cause to say with David:—"Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord: for his mercies are great: but let me not fall into the hand of man." "For He knoweth our frame: He remembereth that we are dust."

In respect of industry, sober habits, intelligence, moral conduct, the common people were not behind, if they were not before, those of any parish in Scotland. They were more favourably situated than most. When I succeeded in getting an ale-house, which stood in the village by my manse, closed, there remained but one public-house in the whole parish to corrupt it; and as that, lying close on the town of Arbroath, was miles away from most of my people, its curse was little felt by us. A poor workman came one dark night reeling out of its door to mistake his road—he being a stranger in the place—and was found next morning lying dead at the foot of a lofty rock, over which he had tumbled in the darkness and his drunkenness. His body was carried into the church, where, on the following Sunday, I endeavoured to improve the event, preaching a sermon against drunkenness. I sought also to improve the event in another way, by attempting to get the public-house closed. But here I failed.

The intelligence of my people was as remarkable as

their sobriety. While the latter was due in a good measure, no doubt, to the absence of temptation, the first was to be accounted for by the presence of an element not found in all country parishes. Many of them were weavers. Power-looms had not then, as they have now, drawn all weaving into the towns, and the click of the shuttle was heard on all sides in my parish, almost every farm having two or three cottages occupied by weavers besides those occupied by the ploughmen. The tenants of these were bound at certain seasons, such as haymaking and harvest time, to leave their ordinary occupation and to assist in the labours of the fields. Ordinarily, these cottars wrought at the loom; some of the daughters and sons of the family following the father's craft, and working under his own eye—a happy, I may say a holy thing for them—where they were safe from the temptations to which thoughtless and inexperienced youth is exposed in the large weaving-shops and crowded mills of our manufacturing towns. Their webs, when finished, they carried into Arbroath, where discussions with the co-fraternity there on. politics, religion, trade, and all public matters belonging both to the State and Church, enlarged their minds, and, as iron sharpeneth iron, put an edge on their intellects rarely to be found among a purely agricultural people; and thus, with some of its rural bloom on their cheeks, they combined the homely, kind, simple manners of the country with the sharpness and power of talk that distinguished the weavers of the town. Among this class there were not a few men as

remarkable for their native talents as for their piety. They were great readers, devourers of books, and that to good purpose. One, for instance, though a hard-working man at the loom, finished an ordinarily sized volume every week; and how he read, how far he was from skipping over the pages, the following anecdote will illustrate:—

The parish library, which I instituted, was kept in the manse, books being given out every Saturday by myself, and by my wife. On my return from Edinburgh on one occasion, I brought with me for the library two volumes of Dr. Chalmers' sermons, where, as every one knows, words occasionally are found which are not in common use. Thinking these would be a famous prize for David Gibson, the weaver friend I allude to, I put the first volume into his hands, expecting him to return with it on the following Saturday. The day came, but not he. It was three weeks before he returned. This astonished me, but not so much as when, on my offering him the second volume, he declined to take it. On expressing my surprise, as I thought he of all men would most appreciate the power and eloquence of that mighty preacher, he said, "Minister, I have not time for him!"

"Time!" I replied; "David, what do you mean?"

"You see, sir," he answered, "I got on so slowly; I had to sit with the book in the tae hand and the Dictionar' in the ither; and the warst of it was, I could na find his *lang-nebbed* words in the Dictionar'!"

This man was a noble specimen of our countrymen. Though in humble life, of a most independent spirit; of a courage that would have faced man or devil in a good cause; of deep and ardent piety; a diligent labourer in Sabbath-schools; of powerful intellect and warm affections; but, like our countrymen—of whom it is said that "a Scotchman never tells his wife that he loves her till he is dying"—not demonstrative. He was warmly attached to me; yet I remember when I left Arbirlot and bade him farewell, he never so much as said a word, even to bidding me goodbye; but there he stood, a powerful, broad-chested man, with the big tears rolling down his cheeks, and my hand in his with a grasp like a smith's vice.

I got a number of prayer meetings established, which, however, in every case did not work so well as I could wish.

I got a number of Sabbath-schools also set a-going in various districts of the parish, which, conducted by the elders and people themselves, were a great success.

Besides the parish library already alluded to, and which succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations, I established a savings-bank, conducting it myself, and leaving in it some six hundred pounds, where the working classes, to whom almost the whole deposits belonged, might not otherwise have saved six hundred pence.

The success of the bank and library I attribute very much to this, that I myself managed them. They were of great service by bringing me into familiar and fre-

quent and kindly contact with the people. They trusted me, where they would not others, with a knowledge of their money affairs. The lads and lasses liked that their minister should see that they were economical and self-denying, and thriving even in this world, and that they should thus rise in his good opinion. They liked to have a *crack* with him about books, and that he should see they were making, over religious books and books of general knowledge, a good use of their evening hours.

To give the Saturday evenings to such work implied my commencing preparations for the Sabbath and the pulpit in good time, nor was it ever my wont to put these off to the fag-end of the week.

These and other extra labours which I undertook showed the people that I was seeking to live for them, not for myself—that I came not to lord it over God's heritage, not to be their *master*, but their *minister*, in the original sense of the word; and to the man who wants to establish himself in the hearts of his people, wean them from vice and the world, turn them to virtue and Christ, I may venture to say, let him "go and do likewise."

I had much enjoyment in the society of some of the common people, out of whom I could have picked half-a-dozen of such sterling piety and superior talent as made me often regret that they had been lost to the ministry; and I may add, that though they were no censorious critics, the knowledge that I had such hearers had a good effect in making me more careful than I

might otherwise have been in preparing for the pulpit. No doubt, one should preach—as David Hume, the sceptic, said one of the Browns* seemed to do—as if they saw Jesus Christ by their side; yet the presence of superior, able, pious hearers, though furnishing a lower motive, is one to keep a man up to his work and to be thankful for.

Among other remarkable persons among the common people, was James Dundas, a weaver, who lived on the north-west boundary of the parish, on a lone moor, where, beyond his wife's, he had no society but that of God and nature. James might have been a poet, though I don't know that he ever cultivated the Muse; a man he was of such an impassioned nature, lofty thoughts, and singularly vivid imagination.

Illusions of the eye are common enough; but the only instance of an illusion of the ear I ever heard of was one he related to me, and which occurred on the morning of a Communion Sabbath. He rose, bowed down by a sense of sin, in great distress of mind; he would go to church that day, but being a man of a very tender conscience, he hesitated about going to the Lord's table; deep was answering to deep at the noise of God's water-spouts, and all God's billows and waves were going over him; he was walking in darkness, and had no light. In this state of mind he proceeded to put himself in order for church, and while washing his hands, no one by, he heard a voice say, "Cannot I, in my blood, as easily wash

* John Brown of Haddington.

your soul, as that water does your hands?" "Now, Minister," he said, in telling me this, "I do not say there was a real voice, yet I heard it as distinctly, word for word, as you now hear me. I felt a load taken off my mind, and went to the Table and sat under Christ's shadow with great delight."

Neither poet nor painter ever presented a more graphic and brilliant picture than this man in relating a dream he had, which greatly comforted him under the death of a daughter, his only child, who died in her maiden bloom, and who for her beauty and still better qualities was reckoned the flower of the parish. I remember but the barest outline of it. He thought he was standing with his daughter within the door of heaven. Two long lines of shining angels stretched from near where they stood, to a throne occupying the end of this glorious vista. Our Lord filled the throne. All of a sudden his daughter parted from him. He followed her form; he saw her walk away and down between the ranks of cherubim and seraphim; at length she approached the throne, where he saw her fall prostrate at the feet of Jesus; then he awoke, and behold it was a dream.

During this period my life was graciously preserved both *from* danger and *through* it.

In the year 1832, we were threatened by cholera, which raged like a fire around us, but never crossed the boundary of the parish; a circumstance due, under God, to the precautions we took, promptly establishing a *cordon sanitaire*, appointing a committee and constable to

watch over the safety of the parish, nor allow any tramp or beggar to enter it. A medicine-chest was got and placed in the manse under my care, that the first appearance of the plague might be promptly met with the most approved remedies. The medicine-chest was never used. Our trust was in God and prevention. So one found, whom we promptly bundled out of the parish. This was the son of the "beadle" or church officer. He lived in Dundee, where his wife, if not some children also, had fallen victims to the cholera. I learned late on a Sunday night that he had arrived in our parish. By dawn of day on Monday morning my servant boy was on horseback, galloping to all the farms of the committee, summoning each to make haste to a meeting at the manse; and before the beadle's son was well out of his bed, we marched him off, out and beyond the bounds of the parish.

In 1834, typhus fever became epidemic in Arbirlot. Its mortality was dreadful. In one considerable hamlet there was not a house in which there was not, or had not been, a dead body; and the panic was such as to loosen the ordinary bonds of brotherhood and humanity. I remember of a cottage in that hamlet, where I found the father, mother, and two children, all laid low under the fever—one child convalescent, sitting by the fireside—and none to attend on them but a little girl, one of the daughters, about ten years old. No neighbour would enter the house; not even the man's own brother, nor any member of his family, though they lived next door. I had myself to

minister to their necessities. So terror-stricken were the people by the very infectious and deadly character of the disease, that they would not help either for love or money. One of the farmhouses was like the ward of an infirmary; the father and nine children were all at one time lying under the fever; a servant had died of it; the other servant had fled; and there was none to nurse all these, some of them to appearance at the gates of death, but the mother, and a *daft* woman who had not the sense to be afraid. Many a day I entered that house, expecting to find some of them dead, and yet, by a wonderful providence, they all "*warselled through.*"

Trusting in God, and feeling that I was in the way of duty, I went everywhere, and never had any apprehensions for myself but once, when I found myself in the inner or *ben* end of a cottage—a small room without a fireplace, or any proper means of ventilation—which two beds, I may say, filled up, leaving an open space of some few feet only between. On the floor lay two boys, stricken down by the fever; while the beds were occupied, the one by the father, the other by the mother, both not only quite unconscious, but in the last stage of the disease, *in articulo mortis.* We laid them a few days afterwards in one grave. On leaving that poisonous atmosphere and appalling spectacle, I washed my hands and face and rinsed my mouth and nostrils in a burn that met the sea close by the door.

This brings to my remembrance, in my Edinburgh experience of typhus, what falsehoods and strange ex-

pedients the degraded and desperate characters of our large towns adopt to raise money. A woman came one day to ask me to visit a man who had been struck down by a horse. He lived in the west side of the Castle Wynd, and though that was not in my parish, which took in only the east side of the Wynd, I agreed to go, on learning that my good friend Mr. Wilkie, their minister, was out of town. After climbing three or four foul stairs, I found myself in a room which, amid much wretchedness, retained in a fine chimney-piece and ornamental ceiling some vestiges of former glory. Here stood two very humble beds; in one lay a woman, in whose yellow skin and glazed eyes and sunken face I saw at once a very bad case of typhus fever. The man might be in the other bed, so I turned to it, and there lay another woman, still worse of the same deadly malady, for she was comatose, unconscious. On expressing my astonishment at this, I was told that the man I was brought to see as knocked down by a horse lay in a closet to which a woman pointed, and on passing in there I found a man knocked down indeed, not by a horse, but by the same fever. I found that a woman had been carried out of that room the previous day to the infirmary, and another the day before that to the grave.

With no small indignation at this trick, I administered a sharp rebuke to the persons who had brought me there by a lie, with the object of obtaining money they would soon turn into drink. I gave them no money but some solemn exhortations and prayer, and left to make for a

confectioner's shop where I might wash my hands and rinse my mouth, and where, on my way, I was discovered from the other side of the street by an eminent minister belonging to our party. We were in the thick of the great church fight that issued in the Disruption. He crossed over to me, eagerly asking the news about our affairs. I had no right to expose him to danger, so I said at once, "My good sir, I am not very *canny* just now."

"How," he replied; "have you been seeing any case of typhus fever?"

"Never saw a worse," was my answer; at which, leaving the Church to her fate, and amusing me so as to forget all my own peril, he went off like the shot of a gun!

Some good and great men—and he was both—have a nervous dread of infection, which happily I had not; hence, in part at least, the impunity with which I have faced disease and death in the most deadly forms—this being one of the means whereby God preserves us from the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

At the same time, while I felt it my duty to expose my life, as much as a soldier, when I was called to do so, I always, wherever it was possible, made the door be left open, and stood between it and the bed, not between the bed and the fireplace.

A special danger to myself occurred in 1837. In that year influenza—"the influence," as the Italians originally called the disease—of a most virulent type, spread all of

a sudden over the whole land, slaying its thousands and tens of thousands like a deadly plague. Men absurdly reject the Bible because of its mysteries; there is no mystery greater than the propagation of that disease. In the beginning of the week, my parish was in the enjoyment of its usual health, and before the week was closed, almost every house was smitten. Attacked myself on Friday, I passed the night in a state of delirium; but having recovered sense enough on Saturday morning to send my servant boy through the parish to intimate that there would be no service the following day, I learned to my surprise, on his return, that the disease had already swept over the whole parish, like fire over the prairie. There was not, indeed, as in Egypt, a dead body in every house; but in every house, or almost every house, there was one or more ill; and of the eleven parish churches in my Presbytery, the Presbytery of Arbroath, more than the half were shut that Sunday. I fancy the like never happened before or since. My own illness was much aggravated in consequence of leaving my bed to go to the death-bed of Mr. Burns, my father-in-law, one of the parish ministers of Brechin, and one of the most pious and devoted ministers of the Church of Scotland. Laid up in Brechin, I was for three weeks in great jeopardy, and for three days, to use a common expression, swam for bare life. But in answer to prayers inspired only by the faith that God can save at the uttermost, I weathered the storm, and after some months resumed my duties at Arbirlot.

And here let me warn those who read these lines

against putting off to a death-bed the things that concern their everlasting peace. Though I lived, I went at that time, I may say, through the process of dying. To the sufferer, dying is not at all the terrible thing onlookers often suppose. The feelings are akin to those of one who, weary and drowsy, is about to fall asleep. If there is not delirium, or actual *coma*, there is great apathy—a state of strange indifference to the concerns of the soul that is passing into eternity, of the body that is descending to the grave, of the parents, wife, and children, amid whose tears, and prayers, and lamentations, we are dying—but dying unaffected, the only one there with a dry eye. I remember an eminent saint, Lady Carnegie, saying, "Let no one delay to old age, seeking and making sure of an interest in Christ; for I have now seen eighty-five years, and yet don't feel old." And this, which is a great blessing if not abused, accords with my own experience. But if, for this and for many other reasons, old age or the approach of it is a bad season, a death-bed is every way a much worse one, for making our peace with God—a work requiring our utmost efforts and most earnest prayers, if these words have any meaning, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

An incident of this illness may be mentioned as an example of shrewdness on the part of a sick-nurse. When death seemed at hand, and when my wife was engaged in prayer, along with my mother and sisters, for (as they thought) the passing spirit, this woman burst into the

room to exclaim, "Na! he is to live yet! he has lifted his hand to scratch his brow!" A curious ground of confidence this, and yet there was philosophy in it; that simple act proving that vitality and sensibility were returning. And since the tide had turned, it gave ground to hope that the ship, after all, was moving and might float off the reef, and come safe to land.

Besides that physiological, there was a curious psychological phenomenon connected with this grave illness, of which I have a distinct recollection. One day when my eldest brother, David, who had succeeded my father, and was then Provost Guthrie, was in the room—only one person being allowed to be there at a time—I saw a strange but most lovely flower growing out of the mantelpiece. Before this I had seen, and also talked with, many persons—the unsubstantial visions of a disordered fancy—who had never been there. But, being acquaintances and friends of mine, they *might* have been there; and thus my reason was unable to control or correct my delirium. In the case in question, however, the judgment was more than a match for the disordered eye; and so here, contrary to the common proverb, "Seeing was *not* believing." One, on being told that a penurious person had given five pounds to a collection, and that, had he been present, he would have seen it, not believing such a thing possible, replied, "Had I seen it, I wouldn't have believed my own eyes!" And no more did I,—saying to my brother, "I see that flower as distinctly as I see you; yet I know that it is not there, that I must be

delirious, because I know it to be impossible for a flower to grow out of that dry stone."

During my incumbency at Arbirlot I was the means of saving two lives; the one by a special providence, the other by promptitude.

In the sweet and picturesque dell through which the Elliot runs to sweep by the rock on which the old Castle of Kelly stands, and lose itself in the sea, stood two or three cottages, one of which was inhabited by an old woman with limbs so paralysed that she could not move a foot, though the house were on fire around her. She had a daughter who, for her own and her mother's support, wrought in a flax-mill; a very dutiful daughter too, who, unlike many nowadays, would have worked her fingers to the bone before her mother should want or be degraded into a pauper. It was her practice before she went to her work in the mill to heap up the flax refuse or *pob* in the wide open fireplace, and having lighted it, to seat her mother down in a chair before this smouldering, slow-going fire. There, with the Bible or knitting-needles in her hands, she sat warm, snug, and comfortable till the meal hours brought her daughter home.

One day I set off to visit—as I often did—this worthy old lady; I felt a strange impulse to visit her that day, breaking through, for that purpose, my usual routine of visiting the sick. On my way down the lonely dell I met an acquaintance with whom I had something interesting to discuss; but in the midst of our talk broke off abruptly, under a strange and inexplicable feeling that I should go

at once to make out my visit. I wondered at this; but ceased to do so when I opened the door of the cottage and stood for a moment rooted to the spot by the sight which met my eyes. The *biggin'* of pob had been undermined by the fire, and becoming top-heavy had fallen forward in a burning mass on the hearth-stone and all around the chair in which the old woman was seated. The flames had made their way to her feet; and there she was sitting, pale as a ghost, unable to move a limb, gazing on death creeping forward towards her in that appalling form! A minute more and the fire had seized her clothes, and she had been burned to a cinder. One bound carried me to her side; and, removing her out of the fiery circle, we joined together in praising God for her marvellous preservation, believing more firmly than ever in a special providence; for how else was I to account for the strong impulse which I felt to break through my usual routine that day, and which moved me, strangely as I thought at the time, to break away from my acquaintance and hasten to the scene of what one minute more had turned into one of death and horrible disaster?

In the second case, a youth who had been driving a cart-load of coals to the schoolmaster's house in the village had received from him a glass of whisky—a bad way of rewarding any kindness, too common in those days. He had hardly drunk it and left the door, when he was seized with tetanus, or lock-jaw. A doctor had been found, who, finding himself unable to part the teeth and open the mouth for the administration of medicine by irons

from the smithy and other appliances, ordered a hot bath. News of this was brought to me as I sat in my study. Without delay the fires were blazing in our chimneys, and with pots and pans of hot water from the manse, and other houses, we filled a barrel in the cottage into which he had been carried, and where he lay, teeth clenched, limbs and arms rigid as iron, and his spine bent up like a bow. The doctor prepared the medicine and committed the bathing of the poor fellow to me. We stripped him to the skin and I made a thermometer of my hand. I was glad to withdraw it, the water was so hot; knowing, however, that the hotter the better in such a case—and the case had come to be desperate—I resolved to risk it; so, giving the signal to three or four stout fellows who stood by, they plunged him in feet foremost up to the neck; he roared like a bull, and was taken out ere long red as a boiled lobster, but happily with the clenched teeth and locked jaws parted wide enough to allow the doctor to administer the medicine and thereby save his life.

He never found fault with me for that parboiling, as did a worthy old bodie for the *ruse* by which I got her into the Montrose Asylum and thereby saved her reason. She had lost it. It was useless to argue with her; so, being a little vain, though a pious old bodie, I took her on her weak side and found her quite willing to agree to my proposal that she should have a drive in a carriage; all the more that I assured her—but without explaining how—that it would do her a great deal of good. Away she went, quite delighted with the honour of a carriage,

which never halted, however, till it drove within the gates of the Montrose Lunatic Asylum. The event turned out as we hoped and wished. The case had been taken in time; and in less than a twelvemonth she was back to her cottage in her sound mind. Hearing of that, and glad of that, I went to see her, never dreaming that she would have any recollection of how she was *wheedled* away; I am amused even now on recollecting the way in which she taught me my mistake. She was sitting alone by the fireside on my opening the door; and before I had time to speak, she turned round, and shaking her finger at me, with more fun than anger in her face, said, "Eh, Minister, I didna think ye wud ha' telt a lee!"

1, Salisbury Road, Edinburgh, *November*, 1872.

There are two matters specially connected with Arbirlot which some who read these memoirs may turn to good use; my Sabbath services for the young, and my mode of preparing for the pulpit.

On entering that charge, I learned that my predecessors had had two diets for worship on the Lord's day, separated from each other by the interval of half an hour. This required the getting up of two distinct discourses week by week, a serious task for any man; and an almost impossible task for a raw young man to do well.

Hugh Miller, a very competent and indeed first-rate authority on matters of composition, said to me that he wondered how a minister could come forth Sunday after Sunday with even *one* good and finished discourse. Robert

Hall had no lower estimate of the difficulties and labours of the pulpit; as appears in his reply to the question of one who asked—"How many discourses do you think, Mr. Hall, may a minister get up each week?" "If he is a deep thinker and great condenser," was Hall's answer, "he may get up one; if he is an ordinary man, two; but if he is an ass, sir, he will produce half-a-dozen!"

While these two diets were to lay a burden on me heavy to bear, calculated to stunt my growth as a preacher, I found that they did not accomplish the end in view; not more than a third or fourth of the congregation remaining during the interval to attend the second service. So, instead of two services, extending in all over three hours, I introduced the practice of one service at noon, which lasted two hours; whereby my people in the mass not only got more preaching, but had their attention fixed on one subject. This was an advantage to them; for it is apt to happen with two discourses on two different subjects discharged close on each other, as with the two balls of boys' tow-guns, the one drives out the other; and, moreover, it was an advantage to me, since I had to prepare only one discourse, a little longer than ordinary—the attention of the congregation being relieved from the strain of a too long continued tension by a short prayer and the singing of a psalm in the middle of the discourse.

At six o'clock during the summer and autumn months, I held a service of a peculiar kind. It was an invention of my own, and its advantages were so many and great

that I recommend it to all ministers wherever practicable. Indeed, I believe even in towns it would prove the best way of employing the Sabbath evenings—better, both for ministers and people, than the usual forenoon and afternoon services.

Having got three or four Sunday-schools set up in various districts of the parish for the children—boys and girls under fifteen years of age—which were conducted by elders and others, and which I was in the habit of visiting in the winter months, I formed a class for young men and women between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. These young persons, amounting to forty or fifty in number, I met with in the church on the Sunday evenings. We had psalm singing and prayer, much the same as at ordinary public worship. The subjects of examination were, first, one or two questions from the Larger Catechism, its subject matter being broken down to the most ordinary comprehension, and abundantly illustrated by examples and anecdotes; second, the sermon or lecture, delivered in the forenoon, was gone over head by head, introduction and peroration, the various topics being set forth by illustrations drawn from nature, the world, history, etc., of a kind that greatly interested the people, but such as would not always have suited the dignity and gravity of the pulpit.

It was astonishing how full an account of my discourse I got from the more intelligent of my class; and as none could be sure, when at church in the earlier part of the day, but that they might be called up for examination in

the evening, there were thus formed in all of them habits of close attention. This exercise was open to all who chose to be present. It supplied the lack of an ordinary Sabbath service to those whose farm or household duties hindered them from getting to church in the morning; and very many returned in the evening, interested in the examination of the class (which contained members of their own or neighbours' families), saying that they liked the discourse as gone over in the class even better than as delivered from the pulpit.

Many wondered how I got the modest and often shy country lads and lasses to show courage for this public trial; but that is easily explained. I never allowed any of them to put themselves to shame; shaping my questions to their age and intelligence, and whenever I saw any about to trip, interposing to prevent an exposure. They knew I would do so; and so, instead of hanging back, they were so eager to leave the ordinary Sunday-schools and join the "Minister's Class"—which embraced the sons and daughters of the chief farmers, as well as the families of their cottars and ploughmen—that I had a difficulty in keeping them back.

So much interest was felt in this class, that the area of the church was usually filled, and people walked out from the town of Arbroath, a distance of three miles, to be present. None of the services and ecclesiastical machinery at work did so much good, perhaps, as this class. It embraced the young at the most critical period of life, at what is called "the tynin' or the winnin' time."

It fostered any piety that God's grace had implanted; it cultivated their minds, and formed bonds of the strongest attachment between them and me, much to my pleasure, and, I had reason to hope, to their profit.

The other matter I referred to as specially worthy of the consideration of preachers was my mode of preparing my discourses for the pulpit. I gave some account of this in a paper in the *Sunday Magazine*,* which was written at the request of certain theological students in America, and has since been translated into the French tongue, and put into circulation on the Continent.

Though I was popular enough as a licentiate, I entered on my charge at Arbirlot, knowing really very little of the art of preaching.

I had, when a student in divinity, paid more than ordinary attention to the art of elocution, knowing how much of the effect produced on the audience depended on the *manner* as well as the *matter;* that, in point of fact, the manner is to the matter as the powder is to the ball. I had attended elocution classes winter after winter, walking across half the city and more, after eight o'clock at night, fair night and foul, and not getting back to my lodgings till about half-past ten. There I learned to find out and correct many acquired and more or less awkward defects in gesture—to be, in fact, natural; to acquire a command over my voice so as to suit its force and emphasis to the sense, and to modulate it so as to express the feelings, whether of surprise, or

* May 1, 1871.

grief, or indignation, or pity. I had heard very indifferent discourses made forcible by a vigorous, and able ones reduced to feebleness by a poor, pithless delivery. I had read of the extraordinary pains Demosthenes and Cicero took to cultivate their manner and become masters of the arts of elocution; and I knew how, by a masterly and natural use of these, Whitefield could sway the crowds that gathered to hear him at early morn on the commons of London, as a breeze does the standing corn, making men at his pleasure weep or laugh by the way he pronounced "Mesopotamia!" Many have supposed that I owe any power I have of modulating my voice, and giving effect thereby to what I am delivering, to a musical ear. On the contrary, I am, as they say in Scotland, "timmer tuned"—have not the vestige even of the musical faculty, never knowing when people go off the tune but when they stick!

This fact recalls to my recollection an incident that happened a short while after I left Arbirlot to be a minister in Edinburgh:—

I had undertaken to preach on a Sunday evening in St. George's Church for a benevolent society, and, as it was my first public sermon, I went with some measure of anxiety to the church. It was full to the door. Whether the presence of such a large place and fashionable congregation was too much for the precentor, I know not; but he went quite out of the tune. He tried another, with no better success. With pale face and quavering voice, the poor fellow tried a third; but, if ever on, he was

soon off the rails. He was now trembling all over. People in the pews were hanging down their heads, and I was left sitting in the pulpit in vexation and a pretty pother. If this was to go on, what was to come of my sermon and of the collection for the Destitute Old Women's Society? I rose, and, proceeding with the order of service as if nothing had occurred, said, "Let us pray"—relieving all from a most awkward predicament, and leaving the precentor time to gather up his scattered senses and conduct the rest of the psalmody very well. Never was any man more grateful—he could hardly have been more so, though I had plucked him out of the sea. When I was unrobing in the vestry, he came up to me, saying, "How much I was obliged to you for the way you saved me to-day, Mr. Guthrie!" "Ah! friend," I replied; "I fancy I did more for you than you could in such circumstances have done for me. Had I stuck in my sermon, would you have started up to relieve me by saying, 'Let us sing'?"

When I went to Arbirlot, I knew pretty well how to speak sermons, but very little about how to compose them; so I set myself vigorously to study how to illustrate the great truths of the gospel, and enforce them, so that there should be no sleepers in the church, no wandering eyes, but everywhere an eager attention. Savingly to convert my hearers was not within my power; but to command their attention, to awaken their interest, to touch their feelings, and instruct their minds was—and I determined to do it.

With this end, I used the simplest, plainest terms,

avoiding anything vulgar, but always, where possible, employing the Saxon tongue—the mother-tongue of my hearers. I studied the style of the addresses which the ancient and inspired prophets delivered to the people of Israel, and saw how, differing from dry disquisitions or a naked statement of truths, they abounded in metaphors, figures, and illustrations. I turned to the gospels, and found that He who knew what was in man, what could best illuminate a subject, win the attention, and move the heart, used parables or illustrations, stories, comparisons, drawn from the scenes of nature and familiar life, to a large extent in His teaching; in regard to which a woman—type of the masses—said, "The parts of the Bible I like best are the *likes*."

Taught by such models, and encouraged in my resolution by such authorities, I resolved to follow, though it should be at a vast distance, these ancient masters of the art of preaching; being all the more ready to do so, as it would be in harmony with the natural turn and bias of my own mind.

I was careful to observe by the faces of my hearers, and also by the account the more intelligent of my Sunday class gave of my discourses, the style and character of those parts which had made the deepest impression, that I might cultivate it.

After my discourse was written, I spent hours in correcting it; latterly always for that purpose keeping a blank page on my manuscript opposite a written one, cutting out dry bits, giving point to dull ones, making

clear any obscurity, and narrative parts more graphic, throwing more pathos into appeals, and copying God in His works by adding the ornamental to the useful. The longer I have lived and composed, I have acted more and more according to the saying of Sir Joshua Reynolds in his "Lectures on Painting," that God does not give excellence to men but as the reward of labour.

To this, with my style of delivery, and self-possession, and command and flexibility of voice, and power of throwing myself into the characters I was depicting—thereby feeling their emotions, and expressing them in such language, and looks, and tones as they would themselves have done—I attribute the "popularity" which I early gained and maintained for well-nigh forty years of a public ministry.

These things I mention for the instruction and encouragement of others. Here, as in other spheres, "prayer and pains" will do anything.

Though but a dumb companion and friend, I must devote a few lines to the memory, and affection, and sense of my dog "Bob," who, lying often at the head of the pulpit stairs, occupied a place on Sundays nearly as conspicuous as myself. He was a magnificent Scotch dog of great size; brave as, or rather braver than, a lion. He expressed his respect for decent and well-conditioned visitors by rushing to the gate as if he were bent on devouring them, and gave them a welcome both with tail and tongue. Beggars, and all *orra characters*, he

wasted no wind on; but, maintaining an ominous silence, stuck close to their heels, showing a beautiful set of teeth, and occasionally using them; only, however, to warn the *gangrels* to be on their good behaviour.

He had but one bad habit when I had him,—to see a cat was to fly at it. This ended in his worrying to death a favourite grimalkin belonging to a neighbour, and that catastrophe raised a formidable commotion. I saw that I must part with Bob or impair my usefulness; so, with many regrets, I sent him to Brechin, fifteen miles off.

There, early on the following Sunday morning, Bob was observed with head and tail erect, and a resolute purpose in every look and movement, taking his way from my brother's house. My brother's wife, struck with his air, said to one of her daughters, who laughed at the idea, "There is Bob, and I'll wager he is off to Arbirlot!" Whether he had kept the road, or gone by some mysterious path across country straight as the crow flies, I know not; but when I was leaving the church, about one o'clock, I was met by the beadle, with his old face lighted up with an unusual expression of glee, and exclaiming—for my dog and Johnny had been always fast friends—"You manna' put him awa', Minister, though he should worry a' the cats in the parish!"

On going to the manse, I found Bob outside the gate, as flat, prostrate, and motionless, as if he had been stone dead. It was plain he knew as well as I did that he had been banished, and had returned without leave, and

was liable to be hanged, drowned, shot, or otherwise punished at my will. I went up to him, and stood over him for a while in ominous silence. No wagging of his tail, or movement in any limb; but there he lay as if he had been killed and flattened by a heavy roller, only that, with his large, beautiful eyes half-shut, he kept winking and looking up in my face with a most pitiful, and penitent, and pleading expression in his own.

Though I might not go the length of old Johnny Bowman in making him free of all the cats in the parish, there was no resisting the dumb but eloquent appeal. I gave way, and exclaimed in cheerful tones, "Is this you, Bob?" In an instant, knowing that he was forgiven and restored, he rose at one mighty bound into the air, circling round and round me, and ever and anon, in the power and fulness of his joy, nearly leaping over my head!

What his ideas of right and wrong were, I dare not say; but he certainly had a sense of shame, and apparently also of guilt. Once, for example, and the only occasion on which we ever knew him to steal, Mrs. Guthrie came unexpectedly on Bob sneaking out of the kitchen with a sheep's-head between his teeth. His gaol-like and timorous look displayed conscious guilt, and still more, before she had time to speak a word, what he did. The moment he saw her, as if struck with paralysis, he drops the sheep's-head on the floor, and with his tail between his legs, makes off with all haste, not to escape a beating, for she never ventured on that, but to hide his shame.

1, Salisbury Road, Edinburgh, *January* 4, 1873.

It was while I held my charge at Arbirlot, that the great Voluntary controversy began to rage. It was fed, fostered, and greatly exasperated by the fear which the Dissenters naturally entertained for the attempts the Church of Scotland, under Dr. Chalmers, was making to raise a large number of additional churches to be endowed by the State. If this "Church Extension," as it was called, succeeded, it would cut out the ground below a large number of the Dissenting Churches of the country; since people, in the popular election of their ministers, would enjoy all the privileges of Dissent, without having to pay for them by maintaining ministers and ordinances at their own expense.

This was driving the Dissenting or Voluntary Churches into a corner. The bread of the ministers and their very existence were in danger, so they were driven desperate: ready, rather than be pulled down themselves, to pull down all Establishments.

In forcing the Dissenters into this desperate position, I thought the Church wrong in point both of principle and of policy. The Dissenters had preserved religion, and made up for her lack of service for many years in many parts of the country; and I would have had these services practically acknowledged by our asking the Government, when we sought the endowments for the purpose of extending the Church, to endow any and every party who, though seceders from the Church of Scotland, adhered to her standards. But this, which at

that early period would have taken off the edge of Dissenting opposition to the extension of the Church as contemplated by Dr. Chalmers, and would thus have been as consistent with policy as with principle, was not done.

In the Presbytery of Arbroath I took an active share in the work of Church Extension. I was too poor to keep a gig, and too wise to get into debt by keeping one; so I got a small cart, which, being fitted with two seats that hung by leathern straps, so far alleviated the jolting of rough roads. Often accompanied by some of my brethren, I careered along at night in this conveyance from distant parts of the Presbytery where we had been holding meetings; the people of the villages through which we passed as they went to bed, knowing, by the rattle of our Jehu-like course, that the minister of Arbirlot was passing.

This zeal of ours wakened up and alarmed the Voluntaries of Arbroath and its neighbourhood. They resolved to turn the battle from their gates; and so summoned my future acquaintance and friend Dr. John Ritchie of Potter Row, Edinburgh, the Goliath of Voluntaryism, to their help. They were led by a bold and clever man, then a minister of one of the Secession Churches in Arbroath, and afterwards known as Dr. Peter Davidson of Edinburgh, leader of the extreme Voluntaries of the United Presbyterian Church. He preached and published in Arbroath a sermon against Church Establishments and in favour of Voluntaryism; and this he and his party there followed up, by calling a public meeting of their

friends, which was to be addressed, among others, by Dr. John Ritchie.

The meeting took place on a day when it so happened that we had a meeting of Presbytery in Arbroath.* After dinner, and when we were at our toddy—for so things were managed in these days—some one suggested that we should go and hear Dr. Ritchie's attack on Establishments. A Methodist minister named Kendall, a keen anti-Voluntary, dined with us that day, and accompanied us to the Secession Church where the meeting was being held. Besides him and myself, there were Stevenson, the second minister of the charge of Arbroath, and afterwards a Professor of Divinity in Edinburgh University; Robert Lee, the minister of Inver-Brothock Chapel of Ease, and afterwards well-known as minister of Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, for his introduction of Ritualistic services into Presbyterian worship; Whitson, minister of the parish of Guthrie; and Kirk, of Barry, my successor at Arbirlot, who had been brought up a Moderate in his native town St. Andrews, but, a devout, resolute, conscientious man, had become an Evangelical. We got into a back seat unobserved, and might have got out equally so, but for a circumstance that resulted to more than one of us in important consequences.

Dr. Ritchie occupied the platform; he was coarse, no doubt, but very clever, and very comical in his various attacks on Establishments. It was impossible, though you were the party attacked, not to laugh, and laugh

* 1st April, 1834.

very heartily. "Potter Row John," as he was usually called, closed his oration a few minutes before twelve o'clock at night by challenging any one to reply—wishing it to be inferred, if no one at that hour attempted to answer his arguments, that they were unanswerable.

Fired with indignation at the absurdity and the injustice of this proposal, to our astonishment, and entirely of his own accord, our little *crouse* Methodist friend sent forth from the back benches where we were seated a vigorous protest against it. He was called to the platform. I was against his going; but, bold as a lion, he threw himself into the crowd which thronged the passages, and reappeared, amid great uproar and confusion in the house, arguing the question on the platform with Peter Davidson and John Ritchie. Apparently ill-used between the two, our little champion's position awakened both our alarm and indignation.

Presently the contention on the platform waxed fiercer and fiercer, till at length I could stand it no longer; and, followed by Stevenson, Lee, Kirk, and Whitson, walked along the tops of the seats to reach the platform—along the passages was impossible, they were so packed; I still wonder how we did not tumble. What an uproar our appearance raised, as we made our way in this Indian file from the back of the church to the platform! The friends of Establishments, scattered here and there among the audience, shouted with joy at our pluck. The Voluntaries, who formed nine-tenths of the assembly, howled

and yelled with rage—some of the women, I well remember, who sat in the front seat of the gallery, with arms bared almost to the shoulder, shaking their fists at us as we passed.

When silence was at length obtained, and the storm had somewhat roared itself out, I repeated our Methodist friend's protest; but while refusing, without the necessary documents and at that late hour of the night, to engage in any controversy with Dr. Ritchie, I undertook, with help of my brethren there, to hold another public meeting in Arbroath, where we should refute his arguments and show that the facts on which he rested his cause had no adequate foundation.

Thus publicly committed, we had to make the best of what we considered a bad job, into which we had been led by the over-zeal of our Methodist friend.

We managed well, dividing Dr. Davidson's sermon into four or five parts, assigning one to each speaker.

The part assigned to me concerned America and the work of Voluntaryism there; Davidson, in his sermon, having maintained that Voluntaryism amply supplied the wants of America, and would ours too, if Establishments were abolished. It was my business to refute these statements of his; and for this purpose I corresponded with Dr. Lorimer of Glasgow, and got some important details from him, with which to go armed to the approaching public meeting. Still, not having them directly from American sources, I felt that their accuracy might be challenged.

On the afternoon of the day before the meeting, as I, rather cast down, was ruminating on this, and arranging my scanty material so as to make the best appearance, a farmer of a neighbouring parish, not a little to my annoyance, called at the manse with the evident intention of staying to tea. On mentioning to him how I was engaged that afternoon, and what I had undertaken to do the following evening, he said he wished he had known that before coming, because he had a few days previously received from a friend in America a Church Almanack, published in New York, which contained all the information on these matters that I wanted. In five minutes after hearing this, I had my agricultural friend's horse at the door, and himself on its back, to spare neither whip nor spur in riding home, that he might send back a messenger with the said Almanack without a moment's delay.

On getting hold of this precious treasure, I found it full of American statistics, showing that Voluntaryism was not, as Mr. Davidson alleged, in his printed sermon, "fully sufficient" for the wants of the country. This accidental call of the farmer was one of the most remarkable providences in my life. It furnished me with material for obtaining a triumph over Dr. Ritchie and his associates, and thereby indirectly caused my being brought to Edinburgh, with all that has followed thereupon.

On the night appointed,* the Abbey Church in Arbroath, where we called the meeting to hear our

* 16th April, 1834.

statement, was packed to the ceiling — some 2,000 persons being present. The Voluntaries, headed by Dr. Davidson, were dispersed in knots through the meeting; whereby, when they hissed, or shouted, or groaned, they appeared more formidable than they really were. Not a few of them sat in front seats of the gallery, and, with a stick in each hand, drummed away to drown the speakers they did not wish to hear. Before Mr. Stevenson, the first speaker, had finished his speech, a great shout arose, which was explained to us on turning our eyes in the direction of the door, where there was a manifest commotion among the crowd. Dr. Ritchie was entering the meeting! He had come all the way from Edinburgh on purpose, and his appearance was hailed by his friends with shouts of triumph. A hasty consultation on our part settled the course we were to pursue, while Dr. John was making his way to the platform, where he at length arrived, to be told by his armour-bearer that they would not be allowed to open their mouths. They had had their say, and now we were to have ours, and the public were to be allowed to judge between us. Dr. Ritchie strongly protested against this, appealed to our chairman, and next to the meeting, the latter a very useless procedure on his part; for, in order to carry our resolution into effect, so soon as Dr. John began to address the audience, I or some one else took speech in hand, and, side by side with this Goliath, addressed them too, and the result was "confusion worse confounded."

As we would not allow the champions of Voluntaryism to speak, its friends there determined that neither should we be heard. So, while Whitson, who preceded me, delivered himself of a good half-hour's excellent oration, nobody farther than six feet or so from the speaker could know he was speaking but by the motion of his lips and his gesticulations. Some of our friends were alarmed, and were for beating a retreat. That, however, was not to be thought of; so we who sat beside Whitson encouraged him to speak out all his speech.

At its close, straining my voice to its full pitch, I informed the meeting that it rested with it to hear us, or not to hear us, and that we should determine by a vote of the house whether we were to be heard or not. An overwhelming majority voted that we should be fairly and quietly heard.

The American Almanack was of signal service, and the meeting itself a great triumph, confirming the strong, settling the waverers, and carrying discomfiture and confusion into the enemies' camp.

Among many amusing instances connected with it, was its salutary effect on one of my own people, and one of the best of them, who was previously rather inclined to espouse the side of Voluntaryism. He heard a man behind him, on my coming forward to speak my speech, say, "There goes that black deevil Guthrie!" That sufficed to settle James Dundas's mind on the whole question!

An account of this meeting was published in a pamphlet

form. It was the first time in Scotland that Dr. John Ritchie had been fairly bearded and beat; and as the echo of it sounded through the land, it turned the attention of the Edinburgh people to the plucky youths of our Presbytery. Shortly thereafter, I was asked to go up to Edinburgh, and deliver one of a series of lectures in favour of Church Extension and Church Establishments. I declined, not being at all sure of how I might succeed, neither wanting by my failure to injure the cause nor make a fool of myself; but I recommended Lee, who was not overburdened with modesty. He went, and delivered himself of a smart, clever lecture, and the result, so far as he was concerned, was his appointment to the parish of Campsie; from that, in course of time, to Old Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, and ultimately to a professor's chair in the University.

While the result of this meeting turned public attention on me, so, too, did another circumstance: I had not been long settled when I began, both in my parish and in the Courts of the Church, to make the following decided movements in a popular and evangelical direction:—

I restored the old practice of having the elders chosen by the votes of the members of the church.

Further, the right of Kirk Sessions to send one of their number as a representative to the Presbytery had long been in desuetude. To the horror of the Moderate, and the terror of some of my timid Evangelical brethren, I, along with the minister of Guthrie, restored the lay or

popular element to the Presbytery—Mr. Whitson and I appearing there one day, accompanied by members and representatives of our Kirk Sessions.

Nor was it long after I was settled at Arbirlot till I began, both in the Church Courts and out of them, to agitate in favour of the abolition of patronage. Of this, I was told by prudent friends, Mr. Maule (afterwards Lord Panmure), the sole proprietor of the parish, and through whose influence I got the charge, complained. These kind friends warning me against the course I was pursuing, my answer was, that I knew Mr. Maule too well to believe that he would interfere with me in a matter which I considered my duty, and he knew me too well to believe that, in such a case, I would yield to any man's interference.

I held public meetings in various places for the abolition of patronage, and brought the matter repeatedly before the Presbytery. There the majority were Moderates; but by good management on our part, and the votes of the elders (for most of the other parishes now followed the example of Arbirlot and Guthrie in sending an elder to the Presbytery), we carried the day in favour of the abolition of patronage.

The "Veto Act" had been passed. No man could any longer be intruded on a people against their declared will. This Act, which was mainly passed through the influence of Lord Moncrieff and Dr. Chalmers, for the purpose of preserving patronage, satisfied many. But, though we defended it, and supported it, it did not

satisfy some of us. At its first appearance we were a very small and despised body of Anti-patronage men. But, eight years afterwards, and one year before the Disruption, the abolition of patronage was carried by a majority in the General Assembly. In 1834, when the subject for the first time * for many long years was pushed to a vote, out of a House of some two or three hundred we could not muster more than forty-two votes on our side. Our opponents called us, in derision, "the 42nd Highlanders," and I never was nearer winning the character of a prophet than when, in my confidence in the goodness of our cause, I ventured at a public meeting in Arbroath, on mentioning this jibe or sneer, to predict that next time we went to battle, we should be "the 92nd Highlanders." And, sure enough, when the year, the debate, and the vote came, we found ourselves but one or two short of that number, having doubled our strength in the interval.

These steps, and those I had taken on behalf of Church Extension, led friends in Edinburgh, and elsewhere, to think of removing me from my country parish to a larger sphere. Invitations came from this and that place to preach. These I declined, having a suspicion of their object, and no wish to leave Arbirlot; thus making void for some years what I learned the great Dr. McCrie, the historian of John Knox, had prophesied, when (brought to the manse of Arbirlot by the Rev. James Gray of

* A slight inaccuracy. A similar motion was proposed in the previous year, when it obtained only thirty-three votes in its favour.

Brechin, an Anti-Burgher like himself, and a much respected friend of mine) he spent a day with us, and on leaving said, in speaking to Mr. Gray of me and my charge, "He will not be long there." My second son, James, was then an infant in the nurse's arms, and I remember of the great and good man taking him in his own, and saying, as he held out the child to me, and in allusion to the martyrdom of James Guthrie, the Covenanter, "Would you be willing that *this* James Guthrie should suffer, as the other did, for the Church of Christ?"

In the year 1836, certain zealous Church Extensionists, with Alexander Dunlop* at their head, erected an additional church, namely, Greenside, in Edinburgh, the magistrates and Town Council agreeing thereupon to make it one of the city charges. With the exception of two or three of them, who had stolen secretly down to Arbirlot to hear me preach, none of them had ever heard me, I having always declined to preach in Edinburgh. Nevertheless, I was one of the three whom they recommended to the magistrates and Town Council for the charge. The other two were Mr. Charles J. Brown, then a minister in Glasgow, and Mr. Cooper, minister at Burntisland. Being Evangelicals, we were fiercely opposed by the Moderates, and being Church Extensionists also, by most of the Voluntaries in the Town Council. The result was that none of us three were

* Afterwards Mr. Murray-Dunlop, M.P. for Greenock.

elected, but Mr. Glover, a country minister, not very *prononcé* on either side; a quiet, good, devout man, who should not have gone in to this Edinburgh charge under the patronage of Moderates and Voluntaries, and who should, perhaps, have gone out at the Disruption.

I remember of being much amused at the sketch of our characters done by the hand of ——, a wild *bodie*. Repeating our names, Brown, Guthrie, and Cooper, he declared the *leet*, given in to the Town Council was not for a moment to be thought of—pronouncing Brown a "bigot," Guthrie a "fanatic," and Cooper a "boy." This affair excited no small commotion at Arbirlot, so far, however, preparing the people, as well as paving the way for my removal next year.

Between the one period and the other, I had been, as I have already told, brought down in the fatal winter of 1836 and 1837 to the gates of death by one of the severest cases of influenza. After being five months out of my pulpit, I had resumed my duties; when Dr. Anderson, one of the ministers of the Old Greyfriars Parish of Edinburgh, died, and the magistrates and Town Council agreed to appoint to the vacant charge one out of any eleven whom the congregation might name. Without any knowledge on my part, or any communication with me on the part of any one, I was named one of the eleven chosen by joint-committees of the Kirk Session and congregation. With the exception of Mr. Sym, the surviving moderator, the whole Kirk Session were Moderates, and a large number of the con-

gregation were the same; but they were, for all that, anxious to have a man who would probably prove a popular minister.

As I learned afterwards, the way in which my name got in was curious enough. On the opposite side of the street from Mr. Dunlop lived Mr. Fleming, a Writer to the Signet, the son of a Moderate minister, and himself a Moderate, but who had great respect and regard for such men as Mr. Dunlop, differing widely though they did, as well in ecclesiastical as in civil politics.

On the morning of the day when they were to choose the eleven (as Mr. Fleming himself told me), he being to attend the meeting of committee of the Kirk Session, and having then nobody in his eye, said to himself, "Alexander Dunlop knows more about ministers than I do: I shall go over the way and ask him to name me some one I should recommend;" and, Dunlop having named me, I was thus through Mr. Fleming put on the leet of the eleven, very much to my own surprise. Each of the eleven was required to preach before the congregation. They all appeared but myself; I returned an answer to the communication of the committee something to this effect—that being happy and useful at Arbirlot, I had no wish to leave it.

This, instead of arresting, rather increased the efforts of those who called me to be one of the three selected by the congregation from the eleven, and out of whom the Town Council was to appoint the minister. Besides refusing to preach, I used every lawful means of getting

my name dropped out of the list of candidates, writing to Mr. Dunlop and others also in Edinburgh, who took an interest in my appointment, to the effect that I insisted on my name being withdrawn. They kept the letters safe and silent in their pockets till the election was over.

I remember of being rather amused with an observation that McCosh* made in connection with this matter. A rumour had reached Arbirlot that a deputation of the Town Council were coming down to hear me; so I wrote to McCosh, asking him to exchange pulpits that I might cheat the deputation. He wrote back saying he would do nothing of the kind, but would look on my leaving Arbirlot that Sabbath to escape a call to Edinburgh, to be as bad as Jonah's flight, when ordered to go to that great city Nineveh!

My election was resolutely opposed by two parties in the Town Council—all the Moderates there, and some of the Voluntaries. The first opposed me because I belonged to the Evangelical party; the second, because I had taken a pretty prominent part in fighting the battle of Establishments.

To the honour of the Voluntaries be it recorded, that their opposition in some cases was turned into support. They wrote to their friends in the provinces to get material for opposing me with success; but got in return letters so much in my favour, notwithstanding that I was

* Then a minister of the Established Church in Arbroath, now President of Princeton College, United States.

so and so, that this attempt to put me out did much to put me in.

Well, the result was that a majority of the Town Council voted for me, of which I received the earliest intimation. Many letters came from friends in Edinburgh, imploring me not to reject the appointment, but go to Edinburgh, and strengthen the hands of the Evangelical party there.

I have not forgotten a display of selfishness and impudence on the part of one of the eleven, connected with this business. Before the election had taken place he was very anxious to get to Edinburgh, and did not appear (though in the habit of affecting great generosity and high principle) very scrupulous as to how the object was to be accomplished. He came all the way from the town where he was a minister, for no other purpose than to ask me not to accept the charge, even though I were elected. This I refused to promise; seeing that, if appointed after all I had done to avoid the appointment, it would look like a providential call to go to Edinburgh.

It was a very serious step for me to take. I had never been heard by any one person of the congregation, so far as I knew. I had never preached in Edinburgh—never tested in that way my fitness for such a position. It was, so to speak, a matter of chance whether I should succeed or be a failure; and having resolved that I would not, like some Edinburgh ministers, be an incubus on the Church there, I had made up my mind, if I should not succeed in filling an Edinburgh pulpit and an Edinburgh

church, to take ship with my wife and family for America or some of our colonies. This was a formidable prospect, possibility at least.

Another difficulty in the way of my accepting this appointment lay in the spiritual interests of the people at Arbirlot. I felt myself bound not to leave them for any sphere, however much more honourable or wealthy, unless I was assured of being succeeded by an Evangelical minister, who should preach the gospel and feed the flock with pious care. My people, the best of them, were in a state of great anxiety about the successor. I knew enough of Lord Panmure's list to be certain that one of three ministers would be recommended by him to the Crown. When I resigned the charge of Arbirlot, the people were in dread that one for whom considerable influence would be used with Lord Panmure would, in consequence of that, be chosen as my successor. He was an Evangelical, no doubt; but, though he afterwards proved a very good minister, was not then popular, but the opposite. Not feeling in conscience that I would be justified in abandoning my flock in such circumstances, I had resolved to have that matter settled before writing to the Lord Provost to accept the presentation.

So, next morning by early dawn, I took horse, and was at the gates of Brechin Castle before mid-day. I sought an interview with his Lordship; and, on being ushered in the first instance into the drawing-room, found myself there face to face with the person whose influence with Lord Panmure was so strong in favour of the minister

my people disliked. He had a shrewd guess of the object of my visit; was very testy, and sneered at my conscience and scruples, and had just begun to break out into a violent passion, when the Baron himself came rolling into the room. The person in question left; and, to the great astonishment, but, I have no doubt, inward respect, of Lord Panmure, I proceeded, with the utmost politeness but firmness to lay the matter before him, telling him that it depended on his Lordship's answer whether I went away to write the Provost of Edinburgh accepting or refusing the presentation. Thanking him for all his great kindness to me while I had been at Arbirlot, and disavowing any wish to interfere with his patronage, I told him I could not leave my people without the assurance that a sound, godly, acceptable minister would be appointed in my place. This he promised to see to. But how amazed he looked, and what a storm began gathering on his brow, when I went further, and told him that, as the wisest of men might be mistaken, I had to say, delicate and disagreeable as it was to me to do so, that, unless the person referred to above were not appointed, then I declined the Edinburgh call. I had previously given no name, and he seemed greatly perplexed and confounded at my boldness. But I shall not forget the expression of relief, both in his voice and face, when, on mentioning the name, he promptly replied, "That gentleman, sir, is now where he should be, and shall be, for me."

And the upshot was, that I wrote immediately to the

Lord Provost accepting the presentation, with all its dangers and responsibilities. I hoped that, as I had not sought the place, but the place, me—that as it had come to me in such a remarkable and providential way—He who seemed to call me to this high post would fit and strengthen me for it.

I left for Edinburgh a month or two afterwards:* and so ended the seven busy, happy, and—I have reason to know and bless God for it—not unprofitable years I had spent in a country charge.

* 16th September, 1837.

Part V.

EDINBURGH.

1837—1843.

On leaving Arbirlot we sent our furniture by a smack to Leith, and came ourselves by steamer to Newhaven. We had rather a rough passage; and it was dark and dreary enough when, at low water, we reached the chain-pier, with our two servants and four bairns.

The house I had taken in the Old Town of Edinburgh was 3, Argyll Square, which is now utterly demolished, having been cleared away for room to extend the Industrial Museum, and form what is to be called Chambers Street. When I was at college, Argyll Square, from its being situated so conveniently to the University, was occupied by a number of the professors. The house which I had taken, and fortunately found vacant between terms, had been that of the celebrated Dr. Blair; but the glory had since his day departed from Argyll Square.

It lingered still about Brown Square which stood close by (and to which I shifted in the course of two years) in the person of old Lord Glenlee, who still lived in that once aristocratic locality. It was he—then a very aged

man, seldom appearing on the bench, but pursuing with unabated eagerness his classical and philosophical studies —who, on being persuaded at length to try the railway between Edinburgh and Glasgow, then newly opened, called a halt at Linlithgow, nor would move another turn of the wheel. Buried at one point in the darkness of tunnels, shut up at another in the bottom of deep, bare, ungainly cuttings—so getting nothing but mere passing glimpses of the beautiful country which he used to enjoy in his carriage, and had time as well as taste to admire —the old judge insisted on being taken back; declaring that he had been "long enough and far enough in the bottom of a dry ditch!"

On going to Edinburgh, I resolved not to go into debt; and, in consequence of the Voluntary war, the Annuity Tax was at that time an uncertain source of supply. In some years it yielded £500; in others, and more frequently, not above £300; making it a very difficult thing to keep on your honest way, and all but impossible to store up a shilling for the future and its contingencies.

Most of the Edinburgh ministers lived in houses too good and costly for their incomes. I avoided this: my rent was only £38. On removing, two years afterwards, to 18, Brown Square, and becoming next door neighbour to Lord Glenlee, I, with a small rise in the world, paid only £39; and when I next moved out of these old-fashioned places to 2, Lauriston Lane, which was fast falling into the sere and yellow leaf, I only paid £40; a rent which rose to no more than £42, before I

stepped, from being a tenant of that low-rented, old-fashioned, plain abode, to become owner and occupant of 1, Salisbury Road—whence I have a view of Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, and the remarkable crystallized trap rock, called "Samson's Ribs;" of Duddingston Loch, with its wooded banks, swans, and picturesque church; and of the sea beyond, breaking on the shores of Aberlady Bay,—a scene of the most beautiful description, spread out before me in its glory of a fine summer morning without lifting my head from my pillow.

One important end they had in calling me to Edinburgh was for the purpose of working out the old parochial system; where a minister should have a parish manageable in point of population; where a church, with free sittings, should be open to the parishioners; and where the whole machinery of that system being set up, it should be vigorously wrought by a full staff of elders and deacons. The efforts of city missionaries, devoted and excellent men as these were, had never as yet produced a palpable change on any district; and it was plain that it was not by city missions, or any such machinery, that the sunken classes were to be elevated, and the thousands and tens of thousands in our large cities who had given up attending ordinances, and had gone astray like lost sheep, were to be brought back to the fold. The best friends of the Church, and I may add of the people, getting alarmed at the rapid increase of practical heathenism in our cities, and seeing that other

means had failed, waited for an opportunity of restoring and trying the old parochial system, judging that what it had done for Scotland in other days it could do again.

They found this opportunity when Dr. Anderson, my predecessor, and the successor in Old Greyfriars of the celebrated Dr. John Erskine, died. I was appointed collegiate minister of that charge with Mr. Sym, the successor of Dr. John Inglis, a celebrated churchman who succeeded a yet much more celebrated man, Dr. Robertson, the great historian.

But, in accepting the presentation, I bound myself to leave the double charge and enter on a single one, so soon as arrangements could be made for working it in conformity with the old parochial system expounded by Dr. Chalmers, in his "Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns," as the only one that would succeed in evangelising the vast heathen districts, and in fact saving the country from ultimate and certain ruin.

Having this in view as my chief end and ultimate object, I contemplated an early separation from the members of the Old Greyfriars congregation. So I left them to the care and culture of Mr. Sym, my colleague, who was to be their permanent pastor, and spent almost all my time and labour among the masses of the wretched people, who, when I had got a church to myself, were to form my parishioners.

Along with Mr. Sym, I preached regularly in the Old Greyfriars Church. He was an elegant and, but that he took to reading his discourses, would have been, as he

was in Glasgow, a really popular preacher. He was one of the most loving and lovable of men. During our three years' intercourse as colleagues, we lived like affectionate brothers, and never had a word or even thought of difference. And never during all that time did he show the least sign of jealousy under trying circumstances—that the church, with a fair good attendance when he preached, had, when I preached, every passage choked full of people standing and all parts crowded to the door. This sometimes troubled me very much; but, to the honour of his good sense and grace, and Christian spirit, it never seemed to trouble him.

Besides preaching each in our turn in Old Greyfriars Church, we kept up public worship in the Magdalene Chapel, in the Cowgate, an old Roman Catholic religious-house, which was situated within our parish, and which is one of the most venerable of our many interesting Edinburgh antiquities.

It was there that John Craig, on his return from Italy at the time of the Reformation, preached for many months in the Latin tongue, in consequence of having lost the free use of his own by long years' residence abroad; it was there that the first meetings of the General Assembly of the Reformed Church of Scotland took place; it was there her infancy was cradled under the care and nursing of John Knox, and men of like spirit; it was there also that the body of the Marquis of Argyll, who was followed next day to the scaffold by James Guthrie, was borne after he had been beheaded,

and *waked* by noble and devout women in Edinburgh—many under the cloud of night, going, for the purpose of preserving it as a sacred relic, to dip a handkerchief in his blood.

This chapel contains the tombs of its founders, who bequeathed a certain sum of money to build it, and support the religious-house annexed to it with seven *bedesmen*, who were to pray daily for the souls of the citizen and his wife who established and endowed the institution. When I preached there on Sunday afternoons, the seats were free, in the first instance, only to the poor parishioners of the district. Till they were accommodated, others had to wait at the door. And a curious and interesting sight it was to see two lines of ladies and gentlemen stretching out into the street, as they waited their time, while "the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind" marched up between them to take precedence in the House of God. The gold ring and the goodly apparel were at a discount with us in the Cowgate, where the respectable stood in the passages, and the poorest of the poor occupied the pews.

While I was colleague to Mr. Sym—a period of about three years—I fortunately had only one discourse to prepare in the week, and I also had my Arbirlot sermons to draw upon.

In the view of going to Edinburgh, I had resolved to adhere to the same style of preaching which seemed to make me popular and acceptable at Arbirlot, concluding that, as God had fashioned all men's hearts alike, human

nature was the same in the town as in the country—in ladies and gentlemen as in lads and lasses. There were not two gospels; and I knew from the example of our Saviour's discourses that the highest taste might be gratified by one of whom it might be said, "the common people heard him gladly." I had read how ministers, who were popular in the country, lost all their attractions and failed when they were taken to Edinburgh. Fancying that they must adopt there a superior and more intellectual style of preaching, they abandoned their natural and efficient for a stiff and stilted manner. On this, which has proved to many a rock ahead, I resolved not to make shipwreck; while, at the same time, I resolved to spare no pains, nor toil, nor time in careful preparation, in making my descriptions graphic, my statements lucid, my appeals pathetic, in filling my discourses, in fact, with what would both *strike* and *stick*.

Living in the parish, on the very borders of its sin and misery, the hours of the day were exposed to constant interruption from my poor wretched parishioners when I was in the house. But most of the day was spent outside among them; and, by the evening, I was so tired and exhausted that I was fit for nothing but the newspaper, light reading, or the lessons and play of my children. Any way, I had resolved, on coming to Edinburgh, to give my evenings to my family; to spend them, not in my study, as many ministers did, but in the parlour among my children.

The sad fate of many Edinburgh ministers' families warned me to beware of their practice. Spending the whole day in the service of the public, they retired to spend the evening within their studies, away from their children, whose ill-habits and ill-doing in their future career showed how they had been sacrificed on the altar of public duty. This I thought no father warranted to do.

Thus the only time left me for preparation for the pulpit, composing my sermons, and so thoroughly committing them that they rose without an effort to my memory (and therefore appeared as if they were born on the spur and stimulus of the moment) was to be found in the morning. For some years after coming to Edinburgh, I rose, summer and winter, at five o'clock. By six, I had got through my dressing and private devotions, had kindled my fire, had prepared and enjoyed a cup of coffee, and was set down at my desk; having, till nine o'clock when we breakfasted, three unbroken hours before me. This, being my daily practice, gave me as much as eighteen hours in each week, and—instead of a Friday or Saturday—the whole six days to ruminate on and digest and do the utmost justice in my power to my sermon. A practice this, I would recommend to all ministers whether in town or country. It secures ample time for pulpit preparation, brings a man fresh every day to his allotted portion of work, keeps his sermon *simmering* in his mind all the week through, till the subject takes entire possession of him, and, as the consequence,

he comes on Sunday to the pulpit to preach with fulness, feeling, and power.

The first winter I was in Edinburgh, 1837-38, was one of extraordinary severity. For six weeks at least there was not a spade put into the ground. The working classes, most of them living from hand to mouth, contracted debts which weighed them down for years; while the poorest of the people, who had not character enough to procure them credit, were like to starve for lack of food and fuel. My door used to be besieged every day by crowds of half-naked creatures, men, women, and children, shivering with cold and hunger; and I visited many a house that winter, where there were starving mothers and starving children, and neither bed, bread nor Bible—till, with climbing stairs, my limbs were like to fail, and, with spectacles of misery, my heart was like to break.

To meet, to some extent, the destitution, we proposed to start a soup-kitchen; and I remember an incident connected with that, which has often both amused and saddened me:—

There lived at that date in Edinburgh a lady who had succeeded to a prodigious fortune. We thought of applying to her in our extremity, though with no very sanguine hope of success, as she had the reputation of being a great miser. I had also heard how Dr. Begg, then Mr. Begg, of Liberton, had failed to screw a penny out of her, having given her mortal offence, when, finding her cowering over a piece of black coal on a bitter

winter day, he seized the poker, set the flame ablazing, and her anger too, as she passionately exclaimed, "Mr. Begg, let my coals alone!"

So, resolving to avoid the rock on which he made shipwreck, I set out, accompanied by two of my elders, in accordance with previous intimation given, to pay this lady a visit.

On entering the house, everything seemed bare and naked. When ushered into the dining-room, we found this possessor of a million sterling at the least sitting, in a cold winter day, with her feet on the fender, and her skinny hands spread out to a great piece of black coal, smouldering in the grate. On our being announced by the man-servant, she turned round, and showing her thin spare figure and a face that looked as if it had been cut out of mahogany, grinned and said, "I am no' glad to see ye."

Having learned from experience that when people begin to joke with you, even though the joke be of the roughest, there is a chance of your getting money out of them, and no way daunted by this cold and repulsive reception, I sat down beside the old lady, whereupon she turned round to me and said, "What do you want? I suppose you are here seeking siller?"

"The very thing," I frankly said, "we have come for."

Her next remark saddened me. It demonstrated the vanity of all earthly riches; how little power they have of conferring happiness; and, with all her wealth and flatterers, what a poor, lonely, desolate, miserable creature,

this possessor of more than a million was. "Ah!" she said, "there is nobody comes to see me or seek me, but it's money, the money they are after."

Whereupon she began to tell us how liberal she had been, giving a hundred to this public object, five hundred to that, and, in one or two instances, still greater sums.

"And how do you think," she asked, "of coming to me? After giving so much away, how can I afford anything to you?"

"Ah, madam," I answered, "we knew a good deal of that before. Had we not known that you were liberal in other cases, we would not have troubled you."

The poor old body seemed pleased with this. My tale of Cowgate suffering and sorrow touched some chords of human sympathy not yet utterly dead within her, and the result was a subscription of £50. We had wrought ourselves so far into her good graces, that she insisted on our taking a glass of wine, promising us some so rare that she kept it for her favourites. She had got her hands on the arms of her chair, and was making a great effort to raise herself up, as we thought, to pull the bell, and get the butler to procure her keys, and bring the wine she wished. When we offered to assist her, she answered, "Do you think I would trust the butler with my keys? Na! na!" So she raised her old crazy form, and went tumbling and tottering to a press on the opposite side of the room,—in many respects as miserable an object, with all her wealth, as the poorest creature huddled up amid the dirt and rags of the Cowgate.

Those only who have been City missionaries can understand what I had to suffer daily in the course of my parochial visitations. Typhus fever was raging like a plague; and as, taking due precautions against infection, I visited every case I was called to, nor fled from any I happened to meet, I had often to face that terrible disease, and, with one, two, or three lying ill of it in one room, to breathe a pestilential atmosphere.

The precautions I took were very simple; and, with God's blessing, they perhaps contributed materially to my protection. For, during the seven years that I laboured among the lapsed and lowest classes, where typhus and typhoid fevers are always slumbering, and often breaking out into fatal rage, I appeared to have a "charmed" life. While ministers and doctors were attacked with fever, to which not a few of them became victims, I never was infected—an immunity which I attributed to this simple precaution, that I insisted on the door being left open while I was in the room, and always took up a position between the open door and the patient, and not between the patient and the fireplace; thus the germs of the disease, thrown off in the breath and from the skin of the patient, never came in contact with me, but were borne away to the fireplace, and in the very opposite direction, by the current of air that came in at the door, and passed me before becoming charged with any noxious matter.

But it was not disease or death—it was the starvation, the drunkenness, the rags, the heartless, hopeless, miser-

able condition of the people—the debauched and drunken mothers, the sallow, yellow, emaciated children—the wants, both temporal and spiritual, which one felt themselves unable to relieve—that sometimes overwhelmed me; making me wonder why, for such scenes and sufferings, I had ever left my happy country parish, with its fragrance of hawthorn bush, the golden furze of the moor, and the bean and clover flowers of cultivated fields, with health blowing in every breeze, and blooming in the rosy cheeks of infants laughing in their mothers' arms, and of boys and girls on their way to school.

I began my visitations in the Horse Wynd. This was originally the main entrance into Edinburgh from the south; and it is not more than a century ago since it had inhabitants who kept their carriages, and maintained such state, that one lady is said to have driven from her own door to the house where she was to dine, the heads of her front horses being before her neighbour's door ere the carriage left her own.

All that had passed away; and these old scenes of fashion and gaiety were, with a few exceptions, occupied by the lowest, poorest, and most degraded people. Of the first hundred and fifty I visited, going from door to door, there were not five who attended any house of God, either church or chapel. Most of the families were clothed in rags. Many of the houses were almost without chair or table; the bed was a quantity of straw, gathered in one corner, beneath some thin and ragged coverlets; and, in almost every case, all this misery was

due to drunkenness. The fathers or mothers drank, and the children were starved with cold and hunger, and so brutally used that the young looked old, and, with a fixed expression of sadness, seemed as if they had never smiled.

The parish had a very considerable number of Roman Catholics, Irish people. They were, in those days, neglected by the priests, and indeed often superciliously treated by them. They were poor. There was nothing more to be squeezed out of the orange, and so it was consigned to the gutter. Day by day, almost, for nearly seven years, I walked the Cowgate, Grassmarket, and Lawnmarket, with their closes, wynds, and courts, and scarce ever encountered a Roman Catholic priest. The poor Irish papists were, on the whole, very civil to me —I usually announcing myself in every house I entered as the parish minister who had come to visit them; nor, on more than two or three occasions, was I exposed to insult from the bigotry of papists, or to danger from the ruffianism of parishioners.

On one occasion, when sitting quietly on a stool and inserting in my note-book the names of the family as I had got them from the lips of a civil, courteous, smart Irishwoman, suddenly a door banged open, and out sprang her husband with rage in his face, and ne'er a coat on his back, ordering me instantly out of his house. Calmly looking at him, I remarked that there was no hurry; knowing well—seeing that my presence was not, like Paul's, "contemptible"—that this Connemara "*boy*"

could not and would not attempt to do what he had threatened—toss me out at the window. Moreover I resolved to beat him; so, closing and pocketing my book, I commenced a conversation on Ireland, its "praties," and its peasantry, till by degrees the clouds dispersed, and he and I parted on amicable terms.

Once I fell among thieves, and was not at all sorry to get out of their company with a whole skin and my watch in my pocket. The stool and last and tools of a shoemaker, which stood in the room where they were assembled, were manifestly a mere pretence. I shall never forget the appearance of one of these four ruffians. His brow was bandaged with a bloody cloth; his face was deeply scarred and seared with small-pox; an empty socket was all he had for one eye, while the other glared out from among the hair of a cap which he wore drawn down over his broken head. These four fellows looked very uncomfortable when I entered. I might be a captain of police, with half-a-dozen constables at my back. They looked at each other with expressions of relief when I announced myself as minister of the parish, and, deeming it best to appear frank and fearless, I sat down on a vacant chair, and began to talk with them. But I soon saw the nature of my company, and was glad to escape, after a few minutes' conversation, without damage.

Most of the houses in these localities are divided by very thin partitions—four small rooms, each inhabited by a wretched family, being made out of what had

originally been one large and spacious apartment. I had once an illustration of this when I had gone down on a Sabbath afternoon to baptize a child in the Cowgate. In the middle of the service, we were interrupted by a sudden and violent noise of strife and debate. From words the parties had proceeded to blows; then, having closed with each other, ensued a violent struggle; then a heavy fall which shook the floor, followed by cries of murder in a shrill female voice, which drowned mine and stopped the service. And all this we heard through the thin plaster walls that had turned what were once the mansions of nobles—still retaining, in marble chimney-piece or stuccoed roof, vestiges of their former glory—into the dwellings of the humbler classes, sometimes of the poorest of the poor.

In relation to this incident, I have sometimes been amused on recalling my combination of courage and caution on that occasion. I could not stand there and be deaf to these wild shrieks calling out for help, and allow a man to be murdered in the next room. Not to baptize, but to prevent murder, though at some risk, was present duty. So, stopping the service, I asked the father of the child I was to baptize to stand by me, while I forced my way into the room where this murder was going on. Strange and startling as they were to me, he, having lived long in such localities, had become familiar with such scenes, and, being quite alive to the danger of interference—that, as they say in Scotland, the "*redding straik is the warst straik*"—would not budge a

foot. They might murder each other for him—he would not risk his life in their quarrels. It was plain if I was to go I must go alone, which I did; but, with the caution of a canny Scot, reflecting that the long tails of my great-coat might give these ruffians a hold of me very undesirable in the *mêlée*, I tucked and buttoned them up before dashing myself against the door of the room, whence issued these choking, growling sounds, the curses of a man and the shrieks of a woman. The door was opened, but only opened a little, and my way of entrance barred by the woman, in dishevelled dress, who entreated me neither to enter the room nor call the police, as she was sure, notwithstanding her cries, that it would end in nothing worse than what was going on—a fight to-day, and friendship again to-morrow!

These people were Irish, and, though the Cowgate has become much more an Irish town since then, there were many Irish Roman Catholics there at that time; also a few Irish Protestants, who had lapsed from all attention to religion; but by much the larger number were Scotch people, Highland as well as Lowland, who had sunk into the depths of poverty—victims, in many instances, of the vice of drunkenness.

Such was the material I had to work upon. The experiment was an interesting one, this, namely;—whether, through means of Dr. Chalmers's, territorial, or, in other words, the old parochial system, I would be able, with the aid of elders, deacons, and other agents, to "excavate the heathen," as Dr. Chalmers used to say;

or, as an illiterate *bodie* who opposed me most keenly of all in the Town Council expressed it, "execute the heathen!"

Speaking of this councillor, we were amused with the judgment he pronounced on my first appearance in the Greyfriars. It so happened that on that day the magistrates and Town Council were present, being engaged in making their annual round of visitation to city churches. Among others of them there was Mr. ——, who, on being asked at the close of the service what he thought of my preaching, replied, "Just as I said would happen; total failure, sir, a total failure!"

Our pulpit stairs were crowded, but not with the old wives of Dr. John Erskine's time. That devout man, who was one of my predecessors in the Old Greyfriars, belonged to an ancient Scottish family. He was eminent as a divine, and was leader of the Evangelical party in the Church Courts as his colleague, Principal Robertson, was of the Moderate.

Dr. Erskine was remarkable for his simplicity of manner and gentle temper. He returned so often from the pulpit, minus his pocket-handkerchief, and could tell so little how or where it was lost, that Mrs. Erskine at last began to suspect that the handkerchiefs were stolen, as he ascended the pulpit stairs, by some of the old wives who lined it. So, both to baulk and detect the culprit, she sewed a corner of the handkerchief to one of the pockets of his coat tails. Half way up the stairs, the good doctor felt a tug, whereupon he turned round to the

old woman, whose was the guilty hand, to say, with great gentleness and simplicity, "No' the day, honest woman, no' the day; Mrs. Erskine has sewed it in!"

In those days, as I have heard my mother tell, when she used to speak of the year or two she spent at school in Edinburgh—where she lived with a Miss Horsburgh, in the High Street, then inhabited by a very different class of people from its present denizens—the two ministers of the Greyfriars had two almost distinctly separate congregations; those who heard Dr. Erskine preach in the Greyfriars in the forenoon attending, not his colleague, Dr. Robertson, in the afternoon, but passing over to Walker, in St. Giles' or the High Church, who was of the same Evangelical school as Dr. Erskine. Those again who attended Dr. Robertson, heard the celebrated Dr. Blair, the colleague of Dr. Walker, in St. Giles', in the other part of the day.

Blair, in whose house in Argyll Square we lived on first going to Edinburgh, was extremely fastidious. He had a highly fashionable congregation, and was not so easy about supplying his pulpit as Dr. Andrew Thomson. Some one, complaining to the latter of the poor substitutes he set up to preach in St. George's during his absence, said, "You put *every*body into your pulpit, Dr. Thomson." "No, no," replied the ready-witted Andrew, "though I believe I put *any*body!"

There goes a story of the torture which Blair had to suffer through yielding to the importunity of one of his old students—he, Blair, being not only one of the

ministers of St. Giles', but also Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh:—

This old student was a Mr. Angus, from Aberdeenshire, who spoke with that strong Aberdonian tongue which people have carried across seas and continents to India, and, after passing forty years there, have brought back with them, perfect and entire as they took it away. Having waited on Dr. Blair, he offered him a sermon, which Blair, shocked at the idea of such tones being heard in the High Church, politely declined—saying, by way of excuse for declining a second offer, "It is my habit, sir, when I am at home, always to occupy my own pulpit." Mr. Angus saw through the excuse, nor could conceal how much he was hurt and offended by what he considered Blair's contemptuous treatment of him. He *fuffed up*, and rose to go, saying, "Doctor, I was ane of your alt poopils, and thocht ye waald be glaad o' a sermon."

Blair relented; and, it being arranged that his old student should preach for him, he went with fear and trembling to church on Sunday. Nor were his apprehensions groundless. The fashionable congregation who had assembled to hear Dr. Blair were amazed at the uncouth being who had taken the place of the polished and elegant divine. These tones and that pronunciation jarred on their delicate ears; nor were they less astonished or Blair less tortured by the matter, than the manner. The preacher gave out a text, announcing that his object was to prove to them that day that man was a fallen creature, or, as he expressed it, that he was "*fa'en*"; and rushing

at once *in mediâs res*, he undertook to prove this, first, from the "*schience of anawtomy.*" Having somehow or other got hold of the fact that while the feline tribe are carnivorous, and horses and cows graminivorous, the pig, like man, is omnivorous, using equally and thriving on both kinds of food—and that there are thus, as might be expected in these circumstances, some points of resemblance between the digestive organs of the pig and of the human race—he launched this out on the astonished heads of the polished aristocrats of Edinburgh, saying, "It is well known that a sou has a' the puddins o' a man axcept ane; and if *that* does na' preeve that man is fa'en, there's naething will!"

Dr. Anderson, my predecessor, who succeeded Dr. Erskine, was, in his own way, a very worthy and respectable man, but no preacher, and very pompous. When at college, I used to go occasionally to the Old Greyfriars Church, little dreaming then that I ever would be minister there. We went to hear Dr. John Inglis, who preceded my colleague, Mr. Sym. Though his voice was uncouth, approaching a howl, he was a very able preacher; and brought out, in reading the Scriptures, more of the sense and spirit than any man I almost ever heard. Before committing ourselves to the inside of the church, we were in the habit of asking the elder at the plate, whose turn it was to preach, and, being told that it was Dr. Anderson's, we always wheeled to the right-about for some other church,—a practice we pretty often observed till we discovered, to our shame and mortification, that the elder,

before whom we had so often faced about, was Dr. Anderson's own brother!

My worthy predecessor, who mouthed his words, and delivered commonplace things with the greatest pomposity, imagined himself an orator and an accomplished elocutionist; but, to be absolutely perfect in the latter art, he resolved to seize the opportunity of John Kemble (the great tragedian) having come down to Edinburgh, to see how he would read a certain passage of Scripture.

Well, one day when Kemble is reposing in his lodgings, the servant announces that a gentleman wishes to see him, and thereupon ushers into the room a grand and reverend-looking man, dressed in the garb of a minister, with a Bible in his hand. It at once struck Kemble that this was some divine who had come to condemn the theatre, and rebuke him for pursuing the business of a playactor. So he was not a little relieved when this figure, stepping up to him with great pomp and dignity, announced itself as the Rev. Dr. Anderson, who had embraced the opportunity of Mr. Kemble's visit to Edinburgh to hear how the great tragedian would read such and such a passage of Scripture.

John Kemble, to use a common expression, took in at a glance the measure of his visitor's foot, expressed himself happy to see Dr. Anderson, and how much pleasure he would have in giving him his advice. "At the same time," he said, "the best way of going to work is not for me, but for you, Dr. Anderson, to read the passage first."

This, the worthy doctor, who had too high an opinion of

his own powers to be daunted before John Kemble or any other man, proceeded to do, *ore rotundo*. Whereupon Kemble, not a little amused with the inflated style of his visitor, gave him this sage advice,—one it would be well for all aspirants at public oratory to remember,—"Sir, when you read the Sacred Scriptures, or any other book, never think *how* you read, but *what* you read."

Edinburgh, when I went there, presented a wonderful galaxy of talent in the Church. When a student, I had seen one equally remarkable at the bar of the Courts of Law; and I had spent many an hour listening with admiration to the forensic displays of John Clerk, Jeffrey, Moncrieff, Cranston, Cockburn, and other such men.

At the time of my settlement in Edinburgh, Dr. Gordon and Dr. Grey—who were, with Dr. Andrew Thomson, when I was a student in divinity, the popular preachers of the town—were still preaching, though on the wane. Dr. Candlish was in St. George's; Dr. James Buchanan was in North Leith; Dr. Cunningham was in Trinity Church; Dr. John Bruce was in St. Andrew's; Dr. Charles Brown was in the New North; and Dr. Begg was in Liberton, which, owing to its proximity to Edinburgh, was, as it were, a part of the town. Then, at the head of all, and towering high above all, was Dr. Chalmers, Professor of Divinity in the University; and associated with him in the Theological faculty was Dr. Welsh, Professor of Church History, an able and accomplished scholar.

These were all on the Evangelical side of the Church, and were all men of mark; each presenting, in his own way and in a remarkable degree, one or more of the features of genius and talent.

There was, at that time, no man of any special mark among the Moderate clergy of the Presbytery. With one exception—Dr. Muir, namely—they had no pretensions to the character of powerful or popular preachers. Dr. William Muir of St. Stephen's, despite an affected manner, was a good preacher, and in his parish a most diligent pastor.

Though by no means a great man—one who, in other circumstances than those he occupied, might have left no mark on the world—Dr. Muir has, in conjunction with John Hope, then Dean of Faculty, and afterwards Lord Justice Clerk, left a deeply-indented one, which many centuries will roll over without obliterating. These two men were, as I believe, the main instruments of the Disruption. It is understood that Sir Robert Peel's Government, in refusing the Evangelical party all redress, and driving our matters to a desperate issue, acted under their advice. It was not the Moderates, with Dr. George Cook at their head, who had the ear of Sir James Graham, in whose hands, as Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel was understood to have left the settlement of our question. Sir James Graham himself was, I believe, a devout man, who had no sympathy with the views generally of the Moderate party. He was thus thrown into the hands of Dr. Muir and his middlemen, and that body in the

Church who, having broken off from the Evangelical section, carried their colours and arms over to Muir and his friends—thus encouraging the Government to believe that, if they were firm, we would all at length break down. These men numbered forty, and were known by the name of the "Forty Thieves"—a name borrowed, of course, from the story of Ali Baba in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments."

The eldership of the Church in Edinburgh and its immediate neighbourhood, who supported the Evangelical or Non-intrusion party, was not less remarkable at that time than the Evangelical party among the clergy. At their head, *facile princeps*, was Alexander Dunlop.* He was my most intimate friend. It was due to him, more than to any one else, that I was brought to Edinburgh. I loved him as a brother, and esteemed him almost above all men. He was so disinterested, so unselfish, so tender-hearted, a man of such delicate honour, so incapable by nature as well as grace of anything low or mean, and withal a devout, humble Christian! He had a grand head and a large heart, and wanted but a voice to have swayed popular assemblies at his will. He sacrificed his interests at the Bar, his prospects of a seat on the Bench, and many things else, to his attachment to the rights and liberties of the Church of Scotland.

There was also Graham Spiers, belonging, like Dunlop, to an ancient and honourable Scottish family, who was

* See note on page 176.

Sheriff of Midlothian, and held a high place in general society. He was a man of intrepid courage, a most perfect gentleman in his demeanour, firm, steady as a rock to his principles, and a clear, calm, pithy, and persuasive speaker. I remember how much Lord Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley) was struck by him, and attracted to him, on hearing Spiers speak at a small Ragged School meeting which we held when Lord Shaftesbury visited our school in Edinburgh; and how, at the close of the meeting, after he had been introduced to him, Shaftesbury expatiated to me on the importance of having such a man as Spiers in Parliament, and how we should take steps to send him there.

There was Earle Monteith, too, Sheriff of Fifeshire, a fluent and ready speaker, who won the favour of his audience by a countenance, manner, and matter full of *bonhomie;* and who, with a singularly happy and buoyant nature, was not less devout in spirit or staunch to his principles than Dunlop or Spiers.

Monteith was a man of singularly jocund temper. I remember into what immoderate fits of laughter he fell on one occasion, when a large number of ladies and gentlemen were present in our Ragged School on the day open to visitors. It was the practice to examine the classes on the meaning of the words that occurred in their lesson; and this brought out so many odd, original ideas, such revelations occasionally of the miserable state of poverty from which they had been rescued, that it was always interesting and oftentimes very amusing. A "down bed," for example, occurred

in the lesson, and on the question, "What sort of bed is a down bed?" being put, one of the boys, eager to show his knowledge, instantly thrust out his arm, the sign of being ready to answer the question, and exclaimed, in terms drawn from his own experience, "It's a bed on the floor, sir!" The word in the lesson, on the occasion referred to in connection with Mr. Monteith, was "miss;" the expression, "he will miss the mark," or some such thing as that. On asking the class what the word "miss" meant, they were silent, and looked a little confused. At length one fellow, sure that he had the proper answer, and confident thereby of getting to the top at one bound, took one step forward, and, impatient to reveal and profit by his discovery, shook his extended arm, waiting for my signal to come out with it. That given, with a look of triumph he shrieked out at the top of his voice, "Miss means a woman that hasna gotten a man!" It was an explosion of an answer so odd and unexpected that it was impossible to look grave, and amid so many ladies to appear not to have heard it. All the company gave way to a burst of laughter, and I remember how Monteith did not recover his gravity for an hour, and more; but was ever and anon exploding into a fit of merriment as the circumstance recurred to his recollection.

James Hog of Newliston, and Maitland-Makgill-Crichton of Rankeillour, might be considered Edinburgh elders, from the interest they felt, and the large share they took, in the management of the Church's affairs. Very

different from each other, they were both able men and earnest Christians.

Mr. Hog, with whom I have spent many a happy day at his seat of Newliston, near Edinburgh, was one of the most generous and amiable of men. He was attacked by paralysis, and died of that disease after a long and most painful illness, an event which occurred some fifteen years after the Disruption. It began with a pain and numbness in one of his limbs, and at length extended itself over the whole body, making him, so far as moving lip or limb was concerned, perfectly helpless. The only way latterly that he could communicate with his family was by pointing with a little reed in his mouth to letters of a printed alphabet. On one occasion he made signs of wishing to indicate something. The reed was fixed between his teeth, and the alphabet held before his face. The words he spelt out were "last day"—"up"—casting at the same time a sweet glance heavenwards.

Maitland-Makgill-Crichton of Rankeillour was a hero in his way. He was a dauntless man, bringing to the cause of the Church, her extension and her freedom, an undivided devotion; able and ready to speak at all times, to fight, if needful, and, rather than abandon a hair's breadth of her principles, to die on her behalf. A man equally powerful in body as in mind, a great athlete, of immense endurance and inexhaustible energy, he would have cut a famous figure in the days of the Covenanters; going down on Claverhouse's dragoons with a psalm on his lips and a sword in his hand, or marching down the West

Bow to die in the Grassmarket, on the scaffold, for Christ's Crown and Scotland's Covenant. I spent many happy days with him at Rankeillour, in Fife, where he bore himself in a way worthy of a Christian man, and also of his noble blood and ancestry.

One of these occasions was specially memorable. With myself and my eldest son, then a student of divinity, were assembled on Christmas Day Sir David Brewster, Hugh Miller, and one or two others. It was a great intellectual treat; and nothing entertained me more than the blank countenances which Makgill-Crichton and Miller turned on Sir David, when he made a remark that suddenly took the wind out of their sails:—Hugh Miller, with all his intellectual greatness, his fine taste, and his admiration of what was noble in others, was, like Makgill-Crichton, a great admirer of physical properties. He and Crichton, in their turn, had been relating wonderful feats of strength they had done; Makgill-Crichton, I remember, telling us, how, having once undertaken to beat the mail-coach, he started alongside of it as it passed the gate at Rankeillour, and, with a run of some twenty miles before him, was the first at the Ferry; whereupon, Sir David, looking as if he intended it for a serious rather than a comical remark, said, "Well, a horse would do more than either of you!"

Besides these elders in and about Edinburgh, there was John Hamilton, an advocate, who, like Mr. Dunlop, threw away his chance at the Bar by giving himself wholly up to the battles and interests of the church.

And, following these, who might be called leaders, there was among the elders of Edinburgh at that time a powerful body of able, active, self-denying adherents to evangelical principles and popular rights.

20, Eversfield Place, St. Leonards-on-Sea, 1*st February*, 1873.

A short while after I was settled in Edinburgh, and before, I think, I had ever been introduced to him, I was placed in very awkward circumstances in relation to Dr. Chalmers, and this, in connection with an application to be made to Government for State countenance and support of his Church Extension scheme.

A noble scheme, worthy of the great genius, philanthropy, and statesmanship of Chalmers, it was pushed on, as I thought, with undue and unreasonable haste, and not always prudently managed. After the Church herself had slumbered for nearly a century, doing nothing to meet the change of times and the wants of a growing population, it was unreasonable in her to expect the State or the country to awaken all of a sudden to its duty. Besides, owing to the weakness of their own, and the strength of the Tory party, the Whig Government of the day could not afford to lose the support of the Dissenters in England and Scotland, by introducing or supporting any measure of extended endowments. To have done so would have been to have sacrificed place, pension, party, to the interests of the Church—a sacrifice politicians of any type would have been slow to make, and least of all the Premier of the day, Lord Melbourne. Instead of making

allowances for the peculiar circumstances of the Ministry, and biding our time, Dr. Chalmers and the Church Extension leaders drove on the chariot like Jehu, regardless of many circumstances which a wise and prudent man takes into account, and turning a deaf ear to the warnings of Lord Moncrieff and others, who, while supporting the Whig Government, were at the same time among the staunchest adherents of the Church of Scotland.

Of that, the case which put me in a disagreeable position towards Dr. Chalmers furnishes a very good illustration. Backed by Dr. Buchanan, and others of what I might call his staff, and especially by the Tory party of the Church Extension Committee (who, of course, did not object to any measure which might embarrass and seem to insult Lord Melbourne's Government), Dr. Chalmers, it was reported, was to propose to send a deputation to head-quarters to demand of the Ministry a grant from the public funds for Church Extension—every member of his proposed deputation being a pronounced Tory.

This I regarded as an extraordinary piece of folly, since common sense would lead every man who has a favour or even justice to ask of another, to employ, not his foes, but his friends, in such a service. This had come to the ears of the Whig party in the Church Extension Committee; and, without my consent either being asked or given, they pitched on me to make a counter-motion, nominating a deputation which, consisting both of Whigs and Tories, would have a non-political and neutral character. I was in a very awkward position; I had only

lately come to Edinburgh; I was a stranger in this Committee; I was to be placed in a very offensive position towards Dr. Chalmers, and one as awkward towards everybody who did not know me, and who were ignorant of the reasons that made my friends urge me to take up this position. It could not fail to seem excessively forward on my part, and leave a bad impression where, at my first appearance, I should have liked to have made a good one.

But, in consequence of the personal quarrels and antipathies engendered by what was called the "Moderatorship Controversy," and which, though much calmed, had not yet subsided, Dr. Candlish, Dunlop, Spiers, and others felt that it might appear like a personal attack on Dr. Chalmers were they to propose a counter-motion to his. So, as one who had taken no part in that unhappy battle, they insisted on my undertaking this disagreeable duty. And, feeling it to be a duty, when the day came, and Dr. Chalmers had made his motion, I had to mount the breach. This opened the way for a keen and long-continued fight, which, so far as numbers were concerned, issued, as we knew it would when the vote was taken, in our defeat.

Dr. Chalmers had been on bad terms with the Whig party for a good while, in consequence of their coldness in the Church Extension cause. He had come to regard them with absolute and intense aversion. I remember the look which he cast on me at our first meeting, when I happened to say something in commendation of the present Earl of Dalhousie, then Mr. Fox Maule, Under-

Secretary for Home Affairs; and who, while in that office, by using the Crown patronage in favour of evangelical men, did so much—more indeed than any other man—to give the Evangelicals a majority in the Church Courts. Notwithstanding this, because the Whig Government would not support his Church Extension views regardless of all consequences to themselves, and to the other interests of the country, Dr. Chalmers had become for the time a furious Tory. And I have heard from the Duke of Argyll, who delighted to tell it (imitating the while Dr. Chalmers' broadest Fifeshire), how the Doctor had said, "I have a moral loathing of these *Whugs!*"

This being the state of matters and of his mind, Dr. Chalmers was very angry at my interposition in the row, and (even though the vote was in his favour) at its results—characterising me in pithy but not very flattering terms. Only they were amusing. Some one, having asked him, as he came out of the meeting irritable and irritated, how it had gone off, "It had gone well, sir," he replied, "but for a raw lad from the country!"

This "raw lad from the country," however, soon proved himself as zealous for Church Extension as Dr. Chalmers himself could be, and I was gratified to find that the Doctor soon afterwards changed his opinion of this "lad," saying to some one who happened to mention my opinion on a certain matter of policy, "Mr. Guthrie, sir, is a man of sound mind."

On behalf of Church Extension I visited a considerable portion of Forfarshire, to stir up to zeal in that cause

both the ministers and people. It was then that Robert McCheyne met with an accident which began the illness that terminated in his death. He accompanied me on my tour to Errol, full of buoyant spirits and heavenly conversation. After breakfast we strolled into the garden, where there stood some gymnastic poles and apparatus set up for the use of Mr. Grierson's family. No ascetic, no stiff and formal man, but ready for any innocent and healthful amusement, these no sooner caught McCheyne's eye than, challenging me to do the like, he rushed at a horizontal pole resting on the forks of two upright ones, and went through a lot of athletic manœuvres. I was buttoning up to succeed, and try if I could not outdo him, when, as he hung by his heels and hands some five or six feet above the ground, all of a sudden the pole snapped asunder, and he came down with his back on the ground with a tremendous *thud*. He sickened, was borne into the manse, lay there for days, and was never the same man again.

While a most pleasant and delightful companion, enjoying nature and all good and innocent things in this life, he had in a rare and singular degree his "conversation in heaven," and the influence for good he left in every place which he visited was quite extraordinary. I remember Dr. Anderson of Morpeth telling me how, when he was minister of St. Fergus, which he left at the Disruption, McCheyne had spent a day or two in his manse; and not only while he was there, but for a week or two after he had left, it seemed a heavenlier place than

ever before. Associated with McCheyne's person, appearance, and conversation, on the walls of the house and everything around seemed to be inscribed, "Holiness unto the Lord."

On that tour, I met in the manses I visited some curious specimens of humanity; not the least remarkable among them being Mr. Wilson, the venerable clergyman of the parish of Abernyte, who had then for his assistant James Hamilton (afterwards the celebrated Dr. James Hamilton, of Regent Square, London). A unique man, a sort of fossil specimen of the theologians who opposed Galileo, and no believer in Sir Isaac Newton, the old gentleman stoutly denied the doctrine of gravitation, and, being a devout, good man, much interested in missions to the heathen, he bewailed the errors of Dr. Duff, our East Indian missionary. "He is taking, sir," he said to me, "quite a wrong course. He is endeavouring to subvert Hinduism by science falsely so called, a philosophy as erroneous as the doctrines of Brahminism. The fulcrum by which he works is Sir Isaac Newton's doctrine of gravitation."

"But surely," I replied, surprised to find any man who had received a liberal education so far behind in his knowledge at that time of day as this venerable old gentleman, "surely, Mr. Wilson, you believe in the doctrine of gravitation?"

"Certainly not!" he replied, and to my great amusement went into a long explanation of its futility, and how hopeless Dr. Duff's enterprise would prove so long

as he attacked Hinduism from such a false position. Looking perhaps as if I were half shaken by the old gentleman's arguments, I expressed a wish that he should solve a difficulty—this, namely, how it was that the inhabitants on the opposite side of the earth to ours stuck on, and did not fall with their heads downwards for ever and ever into boundless space?

"Well, sir," said the simple old gentleman, "that does appear a difficulty; but it is to be accounted for in some such way as a phenomenon we are familiar with at home—that they keep on just as the flies do, who, with their backs downwards and their feet upwards, as you see there, walk along the ceiling of the room!"

Church Extension, though rashly pushed, was a pious and patriotic scheme, worthy of Dr. Chalmers, and certainly not deserving the opposition which it received at the hands of many Voluntaries; for it is by the Territorial System that this country, plied and permeated in every corner by the Gospel, is to be saved. Regardless of this, looking only at their own things, and not at the things of others, and fancying in their own little souls that Dr. Chalmers and those who acted with him were animated more by desire to crush the Dissenters than evangelize the people, the Voluntaries threw every obstruction in the way of our cause, took up extreme positions, and, in the violence of controversy, laid down principles that, pushed to their extreme extent, would have landed the country in practical atheism. They

would have severed all connection and relationship between the State and religion.

We erred on the other hand, and perhaps erred as far and as much, in representing the Church of Christ as dependent almost for its very existence, certainly for its efficiency, on State countenance and support. And this, some of our leaders find to their cost; when the opponents of union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterian and other negotiating churches become (to use an expression of Dr. Chalmers) "resurrectionists of old pamphlets"—eager to find in their speeches violent and extreme expressions against the Voluntaries, and such representations of the Church's dependence for support on the State as would degrade the Bride of Christ into a public pauper.

A meeting which we held on behalf of Church Extension in the parish of —— will illustrate the violent and systematic opposition which the cause had to encounter. Our minister there was a great fool, and a coarse, vulgar man. He had been a ploughman in the parish of which he was then minister. Somehow or other he had pushed his way on from the plough to the pulpit; won that by means of patronage, but with it won so little respect that it was a common saying that, when he was ordained to the charge, the parish lost the best ploughman and got the worst minister it ever had.

If the parish minister was a fool, he who filled the pulpit of the Secession, Dissenting, or Opposition church,

was not. He was a capital preacher, an able and vigorous minister, but not over-scrupulous in the way he used his long head to frustrate our ends and obtain his own.

Dr. Alexander Simpson, of Kirknewton, and Dr. John Paul, of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, formed with me the deputation appointed by the Church Extension Committee. On entering the parish church, where the meeting was to be held, we found it packed to the door by a crowd who, it was plain, from their look and gestures, the noises they made, and the general reception which hailed our appearance, were not honest, simple-minded, and kind-hearted rustics, but an assembly of ferocious Voluntaries. For once, the Voluntary Church there had emptied itself into the Established one, and the adherents of the first gathered in from the country round about; and these, kept well in hand by the Voluntary minister, who was present on the field of battle to command and direct his troops, were, it was plain, the overwhelming majority of the meeting. I remember of saying to Dr. Paul, as we pushed our way through the crowd, "We'll have music here to-night!" Nor had we long to wait for it. The prayer was barely finished, and the first speech begun, when the row commenced.

The opposition was manifestly led by the Voluntary minister, who, with a wave of his hand, ruled the assembly as he chose, calming or raising the storm, while all the time he himself appeared gentle and innocent as a "sucking dove." It was determined that we should not be heard, and heard we were not. We sat

on the platform for four or five hours mute, under a shower of insults; Dr. Paul's bald head, which presented a shining object to the aim of fellows amusing themselves by pitching bits of lime at us from the galleries, suffering something worse than insult. They had got hold of the parish church bell, and kept it perpetually ringing over our heads—an amusement, however, they sometimes varied by calling for a song, which, though not always of the most delicate or appropriate kind, the house took up in full chorus, amid roars and fits of laughter, whistling, cheering, and beating time on the pews with their sticks.

We sat there for four or five mortal hours, never allowed even to open our mouths without being met by an uproar in which our voices were drowned. And we did so to prevent them, after we had fled, taking possession of the field, claiming a victory, and carrying the vote of the public meeting against Church Extension. Thus far we discomfited them; sitting out the storm till its violence had subsided, or rather till almost all our opponents, wearied with our determination and dogged perseverance, had left the church for their homes. The virulence of feeling was such, that we were cursed along the road as we passed through the village late in the night, and stones were hurled at us as well as curses.

The more respectable Voluntaries in the country—the religious part of them as distinguished from the merely political—were very much ashamed of such outrageous proceedings; a full account of which we took good care

to publish, knowing well how much they were calculated to weaken the hands of our opponents, and to strengthen ours.

During all this time, another and greater controversy than that of Church Extension was cropping up. Ten or fifteen years before, Dr. Andrew Thomson had boldly unfurled the banner of "Anti-Patronage," claiming for the people—not all and sundry, not the whole of the parishioners, but such as were members and in full communion with the parish church—a right to choose their own minister. Of course he was opposed by the patrons, and by all the Moderate party in the Church also at that time, who constituted an overwhelming and well-managed majority. He was secretly opposed likewise, and regarded as a dangerous Radical reformer, by a large number of the Evangelicals of his own party, who had got quite familiar with patronage, and were reconciled to it, though they did not deny that it was liable to abuse, and was abused. Thomson was supported only by a few bold and daring spirits among the laity. I remember, when a country minister, attending one of his meetings in Edinburgh, where he delivered himself of a very humorous and clever and convincing speech, but I cannot recall the presence of one minister on the platform but himself.

For my part—while, as a student and preacher, I looked to patronage for a church—I hated the system, believing it to be as unscriptural as it was unfair and

impolitic. I raised money for Dr. Thomson's Anti-Patronage Society, and had not been long settled in Arbirlot when I began to move in the direction of reform. The rights of the people in the choice of their own ministers was the question that finally ended in the great Disruption of 1843; having led—on the settlement of one or two ministers against the principle of the Veto Act—to a collision between the Church and the Civil Courts.

The "Veto Act," as I think I have already explained, was proposed and carried by that preponderating section of the Evangelical party who were not opposed out-and-out to patronage, but, on the contrary, favourable to its continuance under certain restrictions. By this Act, they proposed to give a negative effect to the ancient "call," and prevent any minister being settled over a congregation against the wish and will of the majority of its members, who were to hear the presentee on two different Sundays, and, if not satisfied, give in, without any reason being asked of them, their dissent to his appointment. On this, the Church, or rather the Presbytery within whose bounds the vacant parish stood, was to declare the presentation void, and require the patron to present another, to be accepted or rejected by the members of the congregation.

Such an Act we thought the Church had power to pass, independent of the State and her courts. So Lord Moncrieff and Lord Jeffrey maintained; so, too, did Lord Glenlee—the oldest man and by far the ablest judge

on the bench—and other lawyers of great eminence besides.

The astute and long-headed Dr. McCrie, who was perhaps better acquainted than any of them with the constitutional law of the Church of Scotland, and was certainly not behind any of them or all of them in sagacity and penetrating genius, was of a different opinion. He took a deep and most kindly interest in our struggles, but thought that, without the consent of the State, the Church had no right to pass even the Veto Act.

Dr. Chalmers had his doubts upon this point, and advised that application should be made in the first instance to the State; but he went in with the vastly preponderating majority in passing the Veto Act. This Act did not satisfy us Anti-Patronage men within the Church. We desired the entire abolition of patronage. But, though growing larger year by year, we were still a comparatively small handful. We had no influence in the councils of the Church, were regarded as wild and extreme men, when, in point of fact, in our case "wisdom dwelt with prudence."

Had Dr. Andrew Thomson lived beyond 1831—lived to sway, as he would have done, the Church and the country—there would probably have been no Disruption, —an event which was due to the desire of Lord Moncrieff and Dr. Chalmers to preserve patronage more than to any other circumstance.

Neither had there been any Disruption had the whole Evangelical party, instead of regarding us Anti-Patronage

men as impracticable fools, adopted Andrew Thomson's policy: certain (through the change the Reform Bill had brought into the country, transferring a vast amount of political power from the favoured few to the many) of ultimate and not very remote success. We should have stirred the whole country from Cape Wrath to the Border —and that had not been ill to do—to go to a Reformed Parliament asking a reform in the Church as well as in the State; asking that patronage—which was restored by Queen Anne's Government, and had remained ever since, contrary to the will of the people—should be utterly abolished. And with a little patience, our efforts in that direction would certainly have been crowned with success, to the extent, at least, of giving legal effect to the Veto Law, if not of altogether abolishing patronage.

Had the course above indicated been followed, we should have been kept out of the Courts of Law as to our right to pass the Veto Act. In these Courts we had very little chance of justice, for two reasons:—

First (speaking of them *en masse*), lawyers—with the exception of the town-clerk of Ephesus (who, if municipal institutions in Greece resembled those at home, must have been a lawyer)—have always shown a strong bias to curtail the liberties of the Church of Christ, and, with legal bonds, to bind her neck and heel to the State.

Secondly, we had a bad chance of justice, because some of those who were to sit in judgment on our case carried to the Bench the most intense antipathy to our principles;

and had themselves taken an active part as elders in the Church Courts in ecclesiastical affairs, and in opposing and defeating the measures of the Evangelical party. They were very good men, I believe, but they were *men;* and carried to the Bench the passions and prejudices, which had been naturally gendered by the keen and active part which some of them had previously taken in Church politics.

Nor did the malign influence of this stop with the Courts of Law. The Government of the country, both the ministers of the Crown and the members of the two Houses of Parliament, are naturally inclined to support the Courts of Law, and for this are rather to be commended than condemned; but in our case this was attended with very unfair and unfavourable results. These high powers sitting away in London knew little or nothing of Presbyterianism; ignorant, and ignorant almost to an incredible degree as Episcopalians in England are, of the characters and constitutions of other churches than their own. In a quarrel between the Civil Courts, which were their creatures, and the Church of Christ, that claimed independence for herself—owning no other authority but that of Christ, and no statute book but the Word of God—naturally, the Houses of Parliament decided against us, and in favour of the Civil Courts: the contest being one whose merits they did not comprehend, and, familiar as they were with the slavish subjection of the Church of England to the State, did not seem able to comprehend.

This conflict between the Church of Scotland on the one hand and the Law Courts of the State on the other, which began in 1833 and ended, with ever-growing vehemence and resolution on both sides, in the great Disruption of 1843, assumed, after what might be called a year or two of skirmishing, a very serious character.

The Church contended that, for the temporal advantages of her connection as an Establishment with the State, she had given up none of her spiritual rights; that, even as an Establishment, she had an independent jurisdiction with which, in matters of doctrine and discipline, the civil power and its courts had nothing to do; that their sphere of action was confined entirely to the temporalities belonging to the Church; that the power which gave these temporalities might have withheld them, and, if displeased with the Church's proceedings, might withdraw them; but that, beyond this, the State could not go, having no power to hinder the Church from ordaining men to or deposing them from the ministry, according to the principles which she regarded as agreeable to the Word of God.

However unjust the proceedings might be, and however injurious to the best interests of the country, we admitted the right and power of the State, through her courts or otherwise, to deal as she saw meet with the temporalities (the manses, glebes, and stipends of the Establishment); but we maintained that Christ had, in His Church, a kingdom in this world separate and distinct from all earthly ones, whether monarchies or republics;

that it was by the Acts of the Apostles, and not by Acts of Parliament, that the Church was to guide herself in all strictly spiritual matters.

We held, therefore, that the State could not hinder us from restoring to the people their rights in the election of a minister; nor from depriving a minister of his status, when, in our judgment, he had committed an offence for which he ought to be deposed.

It had been wise in the patrons and landed proprietors to have accepted the situation in which we had placed them. With State endowments, popular representation, and in all her courts a large proportion of the lay element, the Church of Scotland would have presented an Establishment rooted in the affections of the people; one of the strongest buttresses and pillars of our constitution; a Church with a vigorous system of superintendence and discipline; whose creed was in harmony with the sentiments of the people and whose ministers were not thrust in by patrons (who might be Infidels, Turks, Jews, or the grossest debauchees and worst livers of all the country round), but chosen for the office by the free voice and votes of the members in full communion.

However, as if they were intended in providence to illustrate the old saying that "whom God designs to ruin he first makes mad" (with the honourable exceptions of the Marquis of Breadalbane, Mr. Fox Maule, now Earl of Dalhousie, and a few more of that class), all the aristocracy, and along with them almost all the gentry, were dead set against us. They, as they were warned they

would have to do, "paid dear for their whistle." The Disruption opened up a gulf between them and the mass of the people—who, while the others became Episcopalians, adhered to their own Presbyterian faith—a gulf which has been alienating them from each other, and widening ever since that day. Those country parishes where the lairds had been in the habit of ruling supreme, received, in the Free Church and her principles, an element of discord which put an end for ever to this harmony; the lairds and lords losing much of their political power with a people who have been all along more alive to the value of their spiritual than of their civil rights and liberties, and who, in that, present a marked contrast to the English.

Having no resource, therefore, in Parliament, nor in the gentry of the country, nor in the Civil Courts, we had to turn to the people, and do our best and utmost to enlighten and alarm them. We did not commit the mistake which the sound party in the Church of England is now making, of slurring over her gross errors and abuses; covering up her wounds, instead of, as we did, exposing them; shrinking from holding public meetings; making no appeal to the masses and the multitudes of her ordinary adherents, but contenting themselves with a battle in the Court of Arches, and before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, where the people do not regard themselves as actors, but simply as spectators. The Evangelical clergy of the Church of England do not seem to have heard, or, if they have heard, to appreciate

the shrewdness and wit of Dr. John Ritchie's reply to one who disapproved of his going up and down the country and resorting to agitation. "Agitation!" said John, "what good in the world was ever done without agitation? We cannot make butter even without it!"

Like John Knox and his compeers at the era of the Reformation, like our Covenanting forefathers during their struggles and sufferings in the seventeenth century, we appealed from these Lairds and Lords and Judges and Members of Parliament, and all other parties who, through prejudice and otherwise, were opposed to us, to the people of the country; to the members of our congregations, to all and sundry who accounted Christ's Crown-rights and the people's privileges as sacred. For this end,—while, at a heavy cost to us poor ministers, we were taxing ourselves to meet the expenses which, though our lawyers gave their services for nothing, had to be incurred in defending our cause before the Civil Courts,—we were, in all seasons, under all circumstances, and in every parish into which we could get admittance (meeting in a barn or a loft if the church was shut against us), holding public meetings, in addition to frequent and anxious councils in Edinburgh.

The latter fell practically and ordinarily into the hands of some dozen ministers and as many laymen; and upon them especially fell with heavy weight the expenses attendant on these contentions and this agitation. Nothing but strong principle, a sense of duty and ardent enthusiasm, would have met the pecuniary demands thus

made on men, who, in the quietest and happiest times, had no small difficulty in making the "two ends meet."

For some good while before the Disruption, we met on the morning of a fixed day in each week to hold such consultation and take such action as the state of the Church required; and, for the same purpose, I remember well, of some half-dozen or dozen of us going out one morning every week to Morningside to breakfast with Dr. Chalmers there; and how, on one occasion, meeting Lord Cockburn on his way from his country-seat to the Court of Session, he stopped me to ask what I and some other ministers he had previously met were doing out there at that hour of the morning; and how, on its being explained to the witty and humorous lord, he said, "How I wish you would invite me to these breakfasts!"

Amid much that was very serious and the subject of earnest prayer to Him, to whose guidance, as Head of the Church, we looked, and for whose right to rule in His own House we were, like our forefathers, contending, ludicrous things occasionally occurred to relieve the gravity of our situation.

I remember, for example, what happened at a meeting of our council, which Dr. —— had been invited to attend. This worthy man and accomplished scholar, who had for many years been a faithful preacher of the Gospel, was not often called to these meetings, not being, as we thought, eminently fitted to guide the Church through the storm and tempest. As the oldest minister present

on the occasion referred to, he was asked to open the proceedings by prayer, and out burst in his first sentence, and to our astonished ears, his jealousy of us younger men, and his dissatisfaction with the little store set upon his influence and counsel. "Thou, Lord, who knowest all things," he began, "knowest for what purpose *we* have been called here. We do not know, as Thou, Lord, knowest." Serious as affairs looked at that time, with status and stipend in peril, and the fate of the Establishment depending, perhaps, on the resolution we were that day to come to, it was such an odd introduction to prayer, and odd way of hitting us through an address to the Divine Being, that most of us felt it very difficult to maintain our gravity.

I remember another occasion, when a much greater man made as weak an appearance, calling forth from Dr. Chalmers, beside whom I was sitting, one of those severe expressions to which he occasionally gave way. No man was more highly or more justly esteemed than Dr. ——. He made the largest pecuniary sacrifice made by any minister at the time of the Disruption, and he was, besides, honoured and respected by all, as one of the most prudent and sagacious of the Church's counsellors.

Yet, as the heathen said, "Jupiter sometimes nods." Through derangement of the digestive organs or otherwise, the Doctor came to one of these council meetings in an unhappy mood; taking much and manifest offence, because the majority had resolved to follow another course

than he had advised. On a new and still more important case coming on for discussion, each person round the table was asked *seriatim* for his opinion. On its coming to Dr. ——'s turn to deliver his, which we were prepared to pay the greatest respect to, he—referring to his advice being rejected in the former matter—said, "It appears that it does not matter here what *my* opinion is; pass on." On this, Chalmers, turning round his broad, German, Martin Luther face, fixed his strange, mysterious, fishy-like eyes on me, to whisper in his own peculiar style of speech, and what he would only have said on the spur of the moment, "There's no breadth about that man, sir!"

Knowing that, under God, our only chance of success lay in an appeal to the people, and stirring up the ancient spirit of our country and Covenanting forefathers from long years of sleep under the drowsy, deadening reign of Moderatism, frequent public meetings were held in Edinburgh, to be published in all the newspapers, and thus carry our principles, motives, ends, and the danger of the Church and country, into the remotest nooks of the land. The same was done in the provincial towns; and so well arranged and vigorously carried out was the campaign, that the country was divided into districts, and arrangements made for holding in each as many public meetings as possible.

For this end, while some sat in the inner councils of the Church, playing no active part in the open field, as not peculiarly fitted for that department of work,

others, specially fitted to lead a charge—to interest, entertain, instruct, and move to their will public assemblies—went down to address the people in the provinces, and on public platforms fight the battle with any who might have the courage to come forward on the other side.

These were stirring times; rousing the dullest from their lethargy; carrying subjects of keen debate into every household; dividing households; and, in not a few instances, alienating old friends. But we had a grand object in view, and felt ourselves called by conscience, and by the Word of God, to submit, in order to gain it, to any hardships, sacrifice, trial, or suffering.

How we went to work in rousing the people, organizing and working that machinery which, outside the Courts of Law and walls of Parliament, won a battle which was lost inside of them, and established the Free Church on such a broad and popular and scriptural basis as to defy all attempts to put her down, or prevent her development, may be illustrated by this example:—

Mr. Elder of Edinburgh, now of Rothesay, Mr. Begg of Liberton, now of Edinburgh, and I, were deputed to hold public meetings in the principal towns of Ayrshire, Dumfriesshire, and the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright—a large district, where the Covenants took deep root, overspreading the land, and furnishing many a martyr, ready, on the battle-field or on the scaffold, to seal with his blood his testimony on behalf of Christ to rule in His own House, and His sole right so to do.

When the arrangements of the campaign had been all made by correspondence, Mr. Elder and I set off inside the Dumfries mail, while Mr. Begg reached the ground some other way. It must have been before the dawn of a cold, bitter winter day—as I remember of seeing dimly, in the grey of the morning, the church and manse of Tweedsmuir, which stands near the watershed of the Peeblesshire hills some thirty or forty miles from Edinburgh. It had been arranged that we should hold a meeting in Moffat on the evening of that day in the parish church, with which we were accommodated in consequence of the minister—then an old paralytic man—and his assistant being favourable to our side of the question. On arriving there to breakfast, frozen but not *dozened*, we found the town all astir, the assistant in great terror, and our friends in considerable dread of the result.

The other party, it was said, were to appear in the church, and meet us in public debate; led on by some people connected with the Tories of the town and with the aristocracy of the neighbourhood, among others, by a captain of the Royal Navy and a lawyer of considerable consequence and standing. The last had many friends and supporters thereabouts, belonging as he did to one of the two great clans who held such possession of Dumfriesshire in the days of old, that nobody had a chance of being recognised for hospitality or civility unless they belonged to one or other family.

Which reminds me of a story told of a poor wandering woman, who had crossed the Border and travelled north into Scotland till she was belated and benighted; she knocked at the door of a house where a light came streaming out at the window, and cast herself on the charity of its tenants, asking a morsel of bread and a night's lodging. This, her touching and simple appeal, "Is there no good Christian here who will have pity on me and take me in?"

"Na, na," was the answer of a rough voice, as the door, which had been opened to her knocking, was rudely shut in her face, "there are nae Christians here; we are a' Johnstones and Jardines!"

Well, when the evening and the hour of meeting came, we repaired to the church, to find it crammed to the door by friends and foes, the former, however, as soon appeared, being by much the majority. And there, on the platform, prepared to give Mr. Elder and me battle, were the captain, the lawyer, and a number of their partisans. We had some skirmishing before Elder turned his guns on the enemy's position, which he did with such effect that the man-of-war officer sheered out of the fight; and I was left to fight and pound the lawyer, if I could, as well as Mr. Elder had done the gallant captain.

Events at that time succeeded each other so rapidly, our minds were constantly kept in such a state of tension, our attention occupied with such a variety of objects, and our days spent in such a whirl of excitement, that I

have but a dim and hazy recollection of many things that occurred then. Only this I remember about Moffat—we finished off late at night with a great triumph, carrying the people along with us.

END OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE IN BRECHIN.

1803—1814.

We have heard Dr. Guthrie tell with a smile, that strangers to his early history sometimes asked him if he had never been a sailor. They had formed that impression from observing how familiar he was with nautical terms, and how many of his most graphic illustrations, in pulpit and on platform, he drew from the working of a vessel, the wonders of the great deep, the horrors of a shipwreck. It was with surprise they learned that the longest sea-voyage he ever made lasted but a few days, and that the place of his birth and early years was not within sound or even sight of the sea. A glance at his writings shows how keen, too, was his delight in rural scenery of every kind. His spirits, always elastic, became in the country buoyant as a child's; yet his earliest recollections were neither of green fields nor shady woods, but of a noisy street, with dull grey houses on either side, in an old-fashioned provincial town.

He never regretted this "accident of his birth," or regarded it as other than God's wise arrangement

for his welfare. Cowper was one of his favourite poets, but he disliked the well-known line:—

"God made the country, and man made the town."

"Give me the city," he said, "with Christian neighbours at my door, and daily intercourse with genial and congenial spirits. If I fall, I have them there that will help me up; if I flag, I have them there that will help me on. Manifold as are their evils, their temptations, and their snares, it is only in cities that piety enjoys the full benefit of the truth, 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the face of a man his friend.'"

Some of Scotland's most distinguished sons in recent times have come forth from her burgh towns. Dr. Chalmers was born in Anstruther; Sir David Brewster in Jedburgh; Hugh Miller in Cromarty; Robert and William Chambers in Peebles; and it was in Brechin, another of these quiet old Scotch burghs, that, on July 12, 1803, Thomas Guthrie was born, and there chiefly that he spent the first twenty-seven years of his life.

His nature was one peculiarly susceptible of influence from early associations; and though the place of his birth had possessed neither romantic site nor venerable antiquity, Brechin would have had a charm to the subject of this memoir, as the spot round which his earliest memories gathered. Though Dr. Guthrie has not described his birthplace in his Autobiography, there are numerous allusions to it scattered through his writings,

and it had a strong hold of his affections to the last. Every year he visited it several times. Those who accompanied him on these occasions remember how, when its three clustered towers came in sight, he would hail them with fresh admiration; and how, after his arrival beneath the old roof-tree, he enjoyed a leisurely stroll in the evening sunshine along the street, acknowledging the kindly welcome and salutations of every little group; his beaming face seeming to say here, as nowhere else, "I dwell among mine own people."

In the good old coaching days, the great high road from the south to Aberdeen passing through it, Brechin was, in a sense, better known than it is now. Lying off the line of the East Coast Railway, and connected with it only by a branch, the ordinary traveller through Forfarshire catches but a momentary glimpse of Brechin, as he is carried past it some four miles to the east.

The population of Brechin, which is now eight thousand, in Dr. Guthrie's childhood little exceeded five. With a fair proportion of professional men and traders, the bulk of the inhabitants were in these days weavers of linen cloth. The steam factories of the modern town had no existence seventy years ago; and the humbler streets resounded to the cheerful click-clack of the hand-loom, visible through almost every open door. What improvement, too, in the condition of its working-classes in the interval! "I remember, when a boy in Brechin," said Dr. Guthrie in 1868, "if there was a

funeral, those of the working men who attended appeared attired in clothes of as many colours as were in Joseph's coat. This man appeared in blue, another in grey, a third in white, and a fourth in black. At funerals of the working class of people which I have attended there since, I have seen them with as good black coats on their backs as I have; and I am happy to see it. When I was a boy in the town of Brechin, there was not a working man who had a watch. There were only two gold watches, and they were the wonder of the place; but now the working men have all their watches."

As an old Episcopal seat, Brechin is entitled by courtesy to the designation of a "city;" but, apart from its memorials of the past, the interior aspect of the place has little to distinguish it from any other Scotch burgh of its size. With Brechin as with more important places, it is distance that lends enchantment to the view. Seen from the neighbouring heights, owing to its remarkable situation, it is picturesquely distinctive, almost unique. A very steep, winding street, a mile in length, conducts the visitor from the higher portion of the town to the river South Esk; and when he has crossed the bridge, and ascended some way the opposite bank, let him turn round, and he can scarce fail to be struck by the scene before him. The town seems to hang upon the sunny slope of a fertile, wooded valley; the river, widening above the bridge into a broad expanse of deep still water, reflects in its upper reaches the ancient trees which fringe the precipitous

rock on which Brechin Castle* stands, fit home for a feudal baron; while immediately to the right of the castle, and on a still higher elevation, rise the grey spires of the Cathedral and the adjoining Round Tower. The middle distance is occupied by the town itself, descending, roof below roof, to the green meadow which borders the stream; and, for background, at a distance of some ten miles to the north, rises the long, blue range of the Grampians.

In the ecclesiastical annals of Scotland, more than in her secular history, Brechin holds a notable place. That "sair sanct for the croun" David I. erected it, as far back as 1150, into a bishopric, and endowed it with many a broad acre. But long before the Romish prelates ruled, Brechin had an ecclesiastical importance of the first class. This is evidenced by the famous Culdee Round Tower which Dr. Guthrie delighted to show to strangers, as at once the glory and enigma of his native place.

Referring to these interesting remains of antiquity, he writes:—"Close by the old cathedral stands the finest specimen extant of those round towers whose origin is lost amid the mists of an extreme antiquity.† England has none. They were once rather numerous in Ireland; and Scotland retains still the only two she ever had—

* The seat of the Earl of Dalhousie, whose ancestor, Sir Thomas Maule, in 1303, defended Brechin Castle against Edward I., during a siege of twenty days.

† Hector Boethius, in his Latin History of Scotland, under the reign of Malcolm II. (1001-1031), represents the Danes as assailing and sacking "Brethenum vetus Pictorum oppidum." He adds: "Veteris vero fani præter turrim quandam rotundam mira arte constructam nullum ad nostra secula remanserit vestigium."

one at Brechin; the other, a much less imposing structure, at Abernethy, on the banks of the Tay. Near by that tower in Brechin stood a principal station of the Culdees, those first and early missionaries who, coming originally from Ireland, and having their chief seat in Iona, converted the Scotch to the Christian faith. Their college—of which the name, attached to some gardens, still survives—stood under the shadow of that beautiful tower, the graceful monument of an older and purer faith than Popery; and it was probably from their hands that it received—in a figure of our Lord on the Cross, which stands above the doorway, flanked on either side by the mouldering form of a pilgrim—the Christian emblems it bears.

"In the old cathedral church of Brechin, before it was defaced and disfigured by modern so-called improvements, there was a fine old Gothic window, through whose open work of columns the setting sun poured its flood of light on pulpit and on preacher. The cathedral is now the parish church,* having been turned into a place of Protestant worship; though, like cathedrals everywhere, with its long lines of massive Gothic pillars, as little fitted as it was intended for the preaching of the Gospel.

"Thus, within a space more limited than is perhaps to be found anywhere else—as a geological map shows the various strata that constitute the crust of the earth,—this

* Beyond the eastern wall of the parish church, a few ivied arches of the roofless choir remain, beneath which rests the dust of Dr. Guthrie's near kindred.

old city of Forfarshire shows us, in Culdee, in Popish, and in Protestant objects, monuments of the successive religious faiths and forms of the country."

The house in which Mr. Guthrie was born stands in the upper part of Brechin. The open space in front, where four streets meet, is locally termed "The 'Prentice Neuk," and was in his boyhood, as it is still, a sort of rendezvous for half the apprentices and idlers of the town at meal-hours and in the evenings; while each Tuesday (the weekly market-day) saw it filled with a close-packed crowd of farmers and country people in their best attire—a noisy, animated, amusing throng. Along this upper street, too, rattled into town each day the once-famous four-horse "Defiance," frequently driven by Barclay of Ury or Ramsay of Barnton, two notable Scotch lairds, predecessors, in a sense, of the men who form the London 'Coaching Clubs' of modern days. As the passengers stopped to bait in Brechin, the idlers of the place were brought into temporary contact with the great world outside their "little bourg," and sometimes got a glimpse of famous men. A sister of Dr. Guthrie used to tell how, sitting one afternoon by the window, long ago, she observed a youthful stranger who had emerged from the coach walk down the street, leaning on the arm of another gentleman. His appearance irresistibly awakened her curiosity. "What a handsome man!" she exclaimed, as she summoned the rest of the family group to the window, "but how sad that he is lame!" It was not till the coach had resumed its journey to Aberdeen

she learned that the man thus admired and commiserated was Lord Byron.

The household of which Thomas Guthrie formed a part was a large and loving one. He was the twelfth child and the sixth son of David Guthrie and Clementina, his wife, whose maiden name was Cay. Thirteen children were born to them, of whom ten grew up. William, the eldest, went to sea, and is long dead. David succeeded his father in business, and died in 1854. John, who died in 1828, was a banker in Brechin. Alexander became a medical man, and practised in his native county for no less than sixty years. His professional reputation throughout Forfarshire and the adjacent counties was very great. Dr. Alexander Guthrie died in Brechin, in 1869, after a life of eminent usefulness. Charles was a military officer in the East India Company's service, and died in India, in 1844. Patrick, the youngest, became a paper-manufacturer in Brechin, and died there in 1871. Three daughters, Helen, Jane, and Clementina, grew up to womanhood: none of them ever married, and the eldest is now the sole survivor of the family.

The father of this family was a notable man in his way. Sprung from a race of hardy yeomen, who for two centuries had been farmers on the "braes of Angus," and chiefly in Menmuir, a neighbouring parish,*

* In describing Menmuir churchyard, the author of the "Lands of the Lindsays" notices an old monument there, marking "the burial-place of a family surnamed Guthrie, one or other of the members of which have borne an active part in the municipal affairs of the city of Brechin for the past seventy years. As a family, they are still the most consider-

David Guthrie came to Brechin a very young man, with no relatives in trade there, nor special advantages of any kind. Yet such were his aptitude for business, his integrity, his kindliness of manner, that almost at once he drew to himself the good-will of the townspeople; and we find his name in the records of the burgh for 1783 as a member of Council, when he was but twenty-two years of age. In 1803, when his son Thomas was born, he was one of the Bailies, and, from 1815, presided for several years over the old city as Provost or chief magistrate.* In that position, for reasons which his son has explained in the Autobiography, he possessed an amount even of political influence which might seem disproportionate both to the size of Brechin, and to his own personal importance. A curious illustration of this occurred in 1820. In that year a Tory, Mr. Mitchell, contested the Aberdeen Burghs with the famous Radical, Joseph Hume. The common people of Brechin, were, almost to a man, in favour of Hume. But the Provost, Dr. Guthrie's father, was a Tory, and his influence was greatly dreaded by the mob. On that memorable occasion they burned his effigy in the street before his own door, paraded the

able traders of that city, and the present Provost (1853) and the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie, famous as the advocate of ragged schools, are sons of the late chief magistrate. The principal farms of Menmuir were once tenanted wholly by Guthries, and the small estate of Burnside was owned by one of them."

* Curiously enough, the provostship has continued almost uninterruptedly in his family ever since; two sons—David and Alexander, already named—and two grandsons, Colonel Guthrie and Dr. John Guthrie (the present Provost) having held the office in succession.

yellow colours of the party, and shouted under his windows —every pane of glass in which they smashed—

"Hume for ever, Mitchell never!"

Nor was the riot quelled and order restored till the arrival of three companies of infantry from Perth and Aberdeen.

But Provost Guthrie was more and better than an influential citizen and successful man of business. From a very early period of life he was known to be a man who "feared God above many." His life-long consistency and signal honour in commercial transactions were sustained by a constant regard to a Heavenly Father's eye. Never did he allow the cares of the world outside to make him neglect either his own highest welfare or that of his children. In the best and truest sense, as well as in the more literal one, he was careful to provide for "those of his own house."

It is evident, from the language he employs in his Autobiography,* that Dr. Guthrie had originally intended to tell us more than he has done of both his parents. This want, however, in regard to his father at least, is partly made up for by an instructive picture which he gives of a Sabbath-day in the house at Brechin, where the sire was both priest and king.

Referring, in his "Sundays Abroad," to the sneers in which ignorant and irreligious men have indulged on the matter of Scottish Sabbath observance, he says—

* Page 17.

"The best answer I can, perhaps, furnish to these libels affecting Scotland is to draw an honest and candid picture of the manner in which the Lord's-day was observed in the home of my youth. Conversation about the ordinary business of life was not engaged in, nor allowed. No letters were taken from the post-office, nor any but religious books read. Nor were the newspapers looked at, although in these days our armies were in the battle-field fighting the French. No walk was taken but in the garden, and to the church, which we attended regularly, both forenoon and afternoon. In the evening, my father, who had the catechism—the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines—at his fingers' ends, as they say, used to put us through our drill in its questions and theology; and I think I see him still, in his knee-breeches, white woollen stockings, and white cravat—his costume both on Sunday and Saturday—tall, erect, his dark crisp hair dashed with grey, walking up and down the floor of the dining-room, as was his wont, with nine children and three women servants ranged up by the walls, each in turn having a question to answer. Besides this, the younkers had to repeat portions of the Psalms which they had committed to memory, and also the texts of the day, while an elder brother, who had a powerful intellect and gigantic memory, gave a summary of the sermons. The Sabbath passed away like a flood that fertilizes the land it overflows, leaving a blessing behind it."

In his external appearance, however, as well as mental constitution, Thomas Guthrie was more his mother's than his father's son; adding another to the many instances on record of eminent men about whom this has been true, explain it how we may.

Some members of the family, his soldier brother Charles (so often mentioned in the Autobiography) in particular, inherited the father's blue eye, fresh, fair skin, curling hair, and comparatively slight figure; while others, of whom Thomas was one, derived from their mother a precisely opposite physique—a tall, broad frame, dark complexion, lank hair, lint-white in his childhood, though

black in mature years, deep-set grey eyes, long, prominent nose, and thin, mobile lips.

Without her husband's *bonhomie* (for her manner was reserved) Mrs. Guthrie possessed a more marked individuality. While both were godly and walked as "heirs together of the grace of life," her singular decision of character came out in a resolution to abandon the parish church, after many years of attendance there along with her husband.

Provost Guthrie remained in the Establishment; and while he, escorted by the town officers in quaint costume, and carrying halberts, proceeded on the Sabbath morning to his place in the "Magistrates' Loft" of the State Church, his worthy partner, along with her eldest son and daughter, who had joined their mother, wended her way to the humble meeting-house in "Maisondieu Vennel,"* where she worshipped with a small flock of plain but pious people.

Not that this excellent woman had adopted views adverse to the Church of Scotland, as an Establishment. She was born within its pale, and till middle life had no thought of quitting it; but she felt that the welfare of her own soul, the importance of getting spiritual food on the Lord's day, must overrule all other considerations; and so she sought the teaching of Mr. Blackadder, and joined herself to the communion of the Seceders. Speak-

* The Seceder meeting-house, which Mrs. Guthrie attended, stood opposite the ruins of an old Roman Catholic chapel, founded in the thirteenth century, called Maisondieu (God's House), which gives its name to the lane, or "vennel," where it stood.

ing in the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1863, when supporting a proposal for a union between his own Church and the United Presbyterian (the modern representative of the Seceders of his early days), Dr. Guthrie said:—"One of my parents—a sainted mother—became a Seceder, while other two members of my family felt themselves constrained, by the thrusting in of an unpopular minister into the collegiate charge of Brechin, to leave the parish church; and (in consequence of the accommodation in the parish church being deficient) when we were young we were sent to the Secession church. Indeed, until I became a 'preacher,' I generally worshipped on the Sabbath evenings in the Burgher church of Brechin, and I do not think I lost anything by that."

It would be impossible to exaggerate the influence of his mother on her son's future career. He never spoke of her but with the profoundest reverence; and to her prayers, her piety, and precepts, he undoubtedly owed more than to any other human influence. To use the quaint expression employed by an old retainer in the family, when speaking of his earliest days, "He drank in the Gospel with his mother's milk."

Here is his own testimony:—"It was at my mother's knees that I first learned to pray; that I learned to form a reverence for the Bible as the inspired word of God; that I learned to hold the sanctity of the Sabbath; that I learned the peculiarities of the Scottish religion; that I learned my regard to the principles of civil and reli-

gious liberty, which have made me hate oppression, and, whether it be a pope, or a prelate, or a patron, or an ecclesiastical demagogue, resist the oppressor."

Very few persons are now alive who could tell anything of the early childhood of a man who was born seventy years ago. His sister, who still survives, though his senior by many years, remembers that one day, when three or four years of age, Thomas had strayed by himself into the streets. Getting bewildered, he began to cry in great bitterness, but was able to give no account of himself to the passers-by save only, "I'm Tammy, I'm Tammy!" and it was some time before the little fellow with the long, very fair hair and bright eyes was recognised and led home.

A very aged woman, Bell Rait, is still alive in Perthshire who was a servant in the house of Dr. Guthrie's father when Thomas was born, and remained in the family till his eighth year, about which time she had a very dangerous illness. On being asked recently what had been her impression of Thomas at that early age, she characterized him as a "real ready-witted, sympatheesin' kind o' a laddie!"

In his Autobiography, Dr. Guthrie mentions that his youngest brother was able to read the New Testament when but three years old. He himself did not share this precocity. In truth, neither at school nor college did he attain any special distinction. It has been remarked that some duxes at school and prizemen at the university have run too soon to seed, and in after-

years been heard of no more; while on the contrary—comforting fact for the parents of dull boys—not a few who have become distinguished men made no figure at all in their educational career. Anyhow, while Thomas Guthrie as a boy was occasionally dux, and therefore no dunce, yet neither was he a prodigy. He inherited an excellent constitution and a flow of animal spirits that found vent in many a stand-up fight, in swimming, and other athletic exercises; at that period the brain-power had not made its superiority apparent, nor are there any evidences that as yet his imagination was specially developed. All this was to come by-and-by.

In one of his sermons he has recorded an interesting reminiscence of the earliest period of his intellectual life in the following description of his first humble preceptor, Jamie Stewart:—

"Of all men, he cannot fail to enjoy the most exquisite pleasure in the beauties of nature who carries a pious spirit to her fields, and sees his Father mirrored in them all; who hears his praise sung in the voices of groves, or pealed forth in the roar of thunder. Such was the spirit of a venerable old man, who shed on a lowly station the lustre of heaven-born graces. When the storm cleared the busy street, and sent others in haste to their homes, he was wont to leave his loom and shuttle, and step fearless into the war of elements. With his grey head uncovered, and his eye devoutly raised to heaven, he would watch the flash, and listen to the burst of the roaring thunder—replying to those who expressed their wonder at his aspect and attitude, 'It's my Father's voice, and I like well to hear it.' What a fine example of the perfect love that casteth out fear! Happy is that people that is in such a case, yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

The special domestic circumstances in which Providence

cast the early lot of Dr. Guthrie are not to be overlooked in enumerating the elements which combined to develop that faculty of observation which stood him in such good stead all his life long. Living in a town, his mind was early called into activity; his father having an intimate connection not only with the whole community of the burgh, but with a large country district around, his son, even in boyhood, was brought into contact with varied classes of people; and, being an eager listener, he was ever picking up information about Church matters, politics, trade, and agriculture. All this time, his intense delight in nature and in the lower creatures was fostered by repeated visits to his rural kinsfolk in Angus and the Mearns.

In his boyhood, his paternal grandfather* was alive at the farmhouse of Knowhead, in Menmuir; while no fewer than five of his father's brothers occupied farms within a moderate distance from Brechin,—after the names of which (in the fashion of the time) they were styled respectively "Findourie," "Balfour," "Cookston," "Pitmudie," and "Maisondieu."

The last named of these farmhouses had very nearly been the scene of a sad tragedy. It seems that Thomas was in the habit of going, along with his brother Charles, to his uncle's farm at Maisondieu, a mile from Brechin. One Saturday the two boys happened to find their uncle's gun. Little thinking it was loaded, they amused themselves by snapping its flint-lock, pointing the fowling-

* See p. 11 of the Autobiography.

piece at each other. While so engaged, the gun, to their horror, went off, and the charge lodged deep in the opposite wall, where it long continued to be shown. We have heard Dr. Guthrie describe this event, and gratefully acknowledge the providence of God in the very room where it occurred.

His parents had from his childhood desired that this son should be a minister, and, subject to God's will, had destined him for the sacred office in the Church of Scotland. In so doing, it cannot be doubted that one element which influenced them was the prospect of securing him an appointment to a parish through the patronage his father could secure. But it would be a grievous mistake, and injustice to them, to suppose that they had no higher or purer aims than his temporal provision. In common with godly Scottish parents of the richer as well as poorer class, they cherished the honourable ambition of rearing one son at least for the Lord's service in the ministry. As illustrative of this feeling, Dr. Guthrie tells an anecdote in which he humorously introduces another Brechin citizen, alive in his youthful days:—

"An honest countryman came one day to Mr. Linton (head master of the grammar school) with a *halflin'*, a long, empty chap, who had taken it into his head that he would have some little learning. Said the father, 'Mr. Linton, ye see, my laddie's fond o' lear', and I'm thinking o' makin' a scholar o' him.' 'But,' said Mr. Linton, looking at the youth, and not seeing any sign

that there was much in him, 'What are you to make of him?' 'You see, Mr. Linton,' rejoined the father—and it showed how sound the old Scotchman was—'if he gets grace, we'll make a minister o' him!' 'Oh, but,' says Mr. Linton, 'if he does not get grace, what will you make of him then?' 'Weel, in that case,' said the parent, 'if he disna get grace, we'll just mak' a *dominie* o' him!'"

Many a student did Dr. Guthrie in after years welcome to his house in Edinburgh, and none with such special pleasure as ministers' sons, who, born in Scottish manses, and having chosen their fathers' profession, had come up to study for the Church. But Dr. Guthrie was not himself a "child of the manse." He did not even belong, as some of God's most honoured servants in the Scottish Church have done, to a "Levitical family." Dr. Chalmers, for example, born like Dr. Guthrie in a country town where his father was in trade, had close ties to the Church by descent. Many of his relatives, both on the father's and mother's side, had been ministers in the Church of Scotland. But for well-nigh two centuries, so far as we can now trace, there had not been a single minister in Dr. Guthrie's family or among his connections.

His parents, however, had a special liking for ministers and their work. The sainted Robert Coutts had lived at their desire, for the first six months of his ministry in Brechin, under their roof. To all the clergy of the town, Churchmen and Dissenters alike, the Provost's house had an ever-open door, and at his table would invariably be

met one or more of the country brethren on the weekly market-day.

In this well-ordered home, growing up amid many pleasant and profitable influences, young Thomas Guthrie's early youth passed away. The time came at length when the boy of twelve years left home for that Scottish capital, which he had never yet seen, and little thought he was one day to know so well. There can be no doubt he was speaking from his own personal recollection, when in the following passage he describes "that eventful morning when [we] first left a father's house; and, as the gates of that happy sanctuary slowly opened for our departure, amid tears and many a kind farewell, watched by a father's anxious eye and followed by a mother's prayers, we pushed out our bark on the swell of life's treacherous sea. That day—the turning-time of many a young man's history, the crisis of his destiny—may have exerted an influence as permanent on our fate as its impression remains indelible on our memory."*

It was at what we should now consider the preposterously early age of twelve years, that Thomas Guthrie was sent to the University of Edinburgh.

He left Brechin for the capital in November, 1815. Five or six generations had passed away since another youth, bearing the name of Guthrie, had gone forth from Brechin to study for the ministry of the Scottish Church. It was about 1634 that William Guthrie,† cousin

* Gospel in Ezekiel, p. 28. † See Autobiography, p. 7.

to the martyr, left his father's house, close to Brechin, for the University of St. Andrew's.

The accounts which have come down to us of William Guthrie's appearance, eloquence, and character read almost as if they were a description of the subject of this memoir. The following portrait of that Guthrie of the seventeenth century, drawn by his contemporaries, is one for which (by a strange coincidence) the Guthrie of the nineteenth might have sat:—

"His person was tall and slender, his countenance of a fine cast between the grave and cheerful. His liveliness of imagination made his conversation very varied and interesting; and he could with equal ease throw a gleam of cheerfulness over the countenances of his friends, and sink them in deepest thought, by the alternate facetiousness and gravity of his remarks."

"His gifts were great—strong natural parts, a clear head, and a sound heart. His voice was of the best sort, loud, and yet managed with charming cadences and elevations; his oratory singular, and by it he was master of the passions of his hearers. His action in preaching was more than ordinary, yet it was all decent and taking in him. But the peculiar charm in his sermons was the glow of evangelical feeling and sentiment which pervaded the whole. . . . . The pointedness and adaptation of his illustrations sent home to the plainest understandings the truths which he expounded. From the treasures of God's word he brought forth things new and old, and his invention and power seemed as inexhaustible as the materials he had to work upon. No wonder then that his popularity as a preacher was great."

"No difference in church opinions could destroy that love he had for all men. During his last sickness, he was visited by the Bishop of Brechin, and several episcopal ministers. He was gathered to his fathers upon Wednesday forenoon, October 10th, 1665, and was buried in the church of Brechin, under Pitforthy's desk."

Although this "Scots Worthy," therefore, died in Brechin well-nigh a hundred and forty years ere Thomas

"Guthrie was born, we might almost believe that the Covenanting preacher had reappeared in the person of him who has so lately gone from us, sprung from the same locality, bearing the same surname, and manifesting through life the spirit of the same family motto—"*Sto pro Veritate.*" *

* I stand for the truth.

CHAPTER II.

COLLEGE LIFE TO ORDINATION.

1815—1830.

FEW of Dr. Guthrie's college associates now survive. One of the few, the Rev. Dr. Macfarlane, of Dalkeith, a valued friend in after years, thus writes :—

"I remember well your father at college. He was accompanied by John Whyte,* in part as tutor, chiefly as companion and friend. Whyte belonged to the same part of the country, was a sedate, persevering man, had made considerable advances in scholarship, and was in many respects suitable for the place

* For Mr. Whyte, Dr. Guthrie continued to cherish a real regard. He "stayed in" at the Disruption; and, after having reached a very mature age as a "preacher," got, shortly after 1843, the vacant parish of Lethnot near Brechin, where he died in 1854. The first time Mr. Whyte encountered Dr. Guthrie after the Disruption was on the streets of Brechin. He was not sure (as he told a friend immediately thereafter) whether his old pupil, the now famous Free Church minister, would "cut" him or not, and he was much gratified by the kindly greeting, just as of old. (For, we may here remark, Dr. Guthrie was careful to distinguish between those ministers who, like Mr. Whyte, remained in the Church consistently with their principles, and those who remained in by abandoning them.) "Mr. Whyte, I am delighted to see you. Man, how fat and comfortable-looking you are grown! Lethnot Manse seems to agree with you," was Dr. Guthrie's salutation. And when Mr. Whyte meekly expressed his regret that he could not return the compliment, "Ah, friend," said Dr. Guthrie, laughing heartily, "if you had been as long on the Sustentation Fund as me, you would have been as thin as I am!" Along with Dr. Guthrie, we visited Mr. Whyte in the Manse of Lethnot, in 1850, when the two friends spent a long summer day reviving the memories of student life in Edinburgh.

he held. When Mr. Guthrie came to Edinburgh, young as he then was, he was as tall, or nearly so, as when he reached full maturity. Thin, of course, and large-boned, he gave promise physically of becoming the man he afterwards was. He gave evidence, too, of the existence in germ of all the best qualities which were developed in his future life. In the capacious trunk he brought with him from the country there was an ample supply of butter, cheese, eggs, oatcakes, ham, home-made bread, and, in short, all kinds of dairy or farm produce; and these good things he shared with a generous heart and a liberal hand with his young college friends, who were not unwilling to respond to his kindness. I believe, indeed, that John Whyte's interference sometimes became necessary to check or restrain the profusion. When, in the course of the session, a substantial box, replenished with such attractive contents to boys or young collegians—with sometimes scanty fare in their own lodgings, and keen appetites—from time to time arrived, Thomas Guthrie was wont to give a breakfast party, which, seasoned with his good humour, was always acceptable to his guests.

He was a great favourite. His exceeding naturalness, his social and overflowing kindness, his laughing eye, his ready wit, even when he was comparatively a boy, gave distinct augury to the intelligent observer of the kind of man he would become in after years."

Akin to these recollections of Dr. Macfarlane's are some others, furnished by one in whose mother's house, No. 15, Buccleuch Street, Mr. Guthrie and his youngest brother Patrick lodged during part of their student days in Edinburgh. Though but a girl at the time, our informant retains the most vivid remembrance of the tall, dark student, whose genial nature filled the house with sunshine. She remembers the arrival, at regular intervals, of the box from Brechin, its stores arranged by a mother's careful hand. She recalls his fondness for physical experiments; and tells of an "electrical wheel" which their lodger possessed, under whose influence he

insisted, in the hope of effecting a cure, on daily bringing the old rheumatic milkman who came to their house. But chiefly she remembers how her mother was impressed by the family worship which the brothers maintained in their parlour, to the door of which she would steal in the evenings to listen. Come in at what hour they might, this exercise was never omitted; the younger brother generally reading the chapter, while the elder prayed. Accustomed to have students as lodgers, this practice struck Mrs. Stewart from its being so rare with the young men who frequented her house,—among "medicals" hardly to be thought of, nor among students even of the graver profession by any means universal.

It was from her house, towards the end of the session 1823-24, that the brothers were hastily summoned to their father's deathbed in Brechin. Years passed by, and Mrs. Stewart often wondered what had become of her favourite lodger; when, one day in 1837, her daughter read aloud from the newspaper that a "Rev. Thomas Guthrie" was presented by the Edinburgh Town Council to the Church of Old Greyfriars. Could it be the divinity student from Brechin? Mrs. Stewart was a Seceder, but took care to be in Old Greyfriars the first Sunday when the "presentee" should preach. There was no mistaking him; she returned home delighted at the recognition, astonished by the sermon, and with quite an increased sense of her own importance.

On that Sabbath morning, Mr. Guthrie was so com-

pletely a stranger to his new congregation that he passed the very elders at the church "plate" without their knowing who he was. His old landlady was thus one of the very few among the audience who recognised him. Besides her, however, there was another, in whose case the recognition arose out of the following ludicrous incident of Mr. Guthrie's college days. In his Autobiography he tells of occasionally attending the Old Greyfriars Church, to hear Dr. Inglis. It appears that some fellow-students and he used to avail themselves on those occasions of the "Elders' Pew"—a raised platform in front of the pulpit—which was comparatively empty. This presumption gave great offence; and, on their arrival one particular Sunday, they found all access to it barred by a strong lock on the door. For a moment, they were nonplussed, routed apparently; the main body was commencing a retreat down the aisle, when, to the amazement, if not amusement, of the congregation, a youth, much taller than the rest, and whose features were strongly marked, with one spring vaulted over the locked door, and was speedily followed in the same unceremonious fashion by his companions. Thomas Guthrie was the ringleader on that occasion. Little did the worthy elders, who had locked their pew against him, dream that he was to take possession of the pulpit itself by-and-by! Our informant never forgot that student's appearance; and when, many years thereafter, Mr. Guthrie entered the pulpit for the first time, great was Mr. Paton's astonishment, as he whispered

to his mother, "That's the same long student who jumped into the elders' seat!"

During one of his later sessions at Edinburgh, Mr. Guthrie and his younger brother were joined in their lodgings by a third student from Brechin, who was to Mr. Guthrie even as a brother. This was James Martin, minister first of the rural parish of Glenisla, in Forfarshire, and afterwards (as successor to Dr. Andrew Thomson) of St. George's Church, Edinburgh. He is mentioned incidentally in the Autobiography; but, knowing how strong was the attachment between them, we name him here as one who exercised a salutary influence on the early life of Mr. Guthrie, to whom he was senior by three years. The families to which they respectively belonged were very intimate, while the destination of both these young men being the ministry added a hallowed bond to that of natural affection.

Martin died in his early prime at Leghorn, whither he had gone in search of health, in 1834; and the following letter, written to his only sister by Dr. Guthrie, when visiting Italy thirty-one years thereafter, forms a touching testimony to the depth and permanence of this early friendship:—

"*Leghorn, 29th March*, 1865.

"My dear Mrs. Ogilvie,—I had this day the melancholy pleasure of visiting the beautiful spot where your brother, my oldest and beloved friend, sleeps in Jesus, waiting a glorious resurrection. What sacred and tender memories did it revive! Our boyhood; our college days; my pleasant and happy visits to Glenisla; his warm affection for me, and mine to him; your father, and mother, and John; and—what I have often thought of—what two brothers we had been, had it pleased

God that he had been spared to be a brother minister with me in Edinburgh. As I told them here, when they wondered at my great anxiety to visit Mr. Martin's tomb, I don't remember the time when I did not know and love him. It is a grand and blessed prospect, to look forward to a meeting which knows no parting. 'He is not dead, but sleepeth.'

"I saw violets, and many beautiful and to us strange flowers, growing in the cemetery. But I thought (although they will be, what his memory will never be, withered before this reaches you) you would be best pleased with these two or three daisies that David and I plucked from his very grave. Besides that,—they are flowers not common in Italy, but peculiarly belonging to the dens and braes where we played many a happy day. I plucked also a branch from the cypress that flings its shadow on his tomb.

"Yours very affectionately

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

From 1815 to 1824 Mr. Guthrie came up regularly to the University of Edinburgh, and after receiving licence returned again for the session 1825-26. His college training was thus unusually complete, extending over ten years. But the result was more the acquisition of general culture than of "scholarship," in the academic sense of the word. For theology itself, as a *science*, he had no special talent or taste. It is true that the professors who at that period filled the chairs in the Divinity Hall were not men likely to fire their students with enthusiasm; but neither had he in after life any relish for critical works in Biblical exegesis or folios of systematic theology. To classical scholarship he made no pretension; mental philosophy he positively shunned. The one subject for which he had a special aptitude was undoubtedly physical science; but he does not seem to have devoted himself to any one department of study

with that undivided application which is requisite to the obtaining of academic honours. Nevertheless, though he could not be termed, in the strict sense of the word, a "student," it was not because he was not studious, far less that he was indolent. His note-books of professors' lectures, carefully and laboriously kept, remain to prove his diligence; and all through his college career, even when carrying on his studies during the holidays, he rose before six o'clock.

During his whole college life, his reading in general literature was of an unusually varied kind;* and doubtless the extent and variety of the knowledge acquired in these ten years proved to him of greater value than the possession of "scholarship," strictly so called, however accurate or extensive. But he was far from undervaluing erudition when he met it in other men. In his own words, "I do not depreciate classical learning. I know little of it; but that is not my boast, but my regret; and, had I time, I would even yet begin my classes anew."

* He used to tell of his breakfasting in college days at Dr. Buchanan's, in Reid's Court, off the Canongate. The old minister made a point of inquiring at each student severally what books he had been perusing during the recess. In reply to the question, Mr. Guthrie was ready with quite a long and varied list. More fortunate he, than a somewhat aged and uncultured aspirant to the ministry from the north, whom he met there one morning, and of whom he used to tell the following:— "Well, Mr. ———," kindly asked the venerable Doctor, "and what have *you* been reading?" "Sermons, Sir." "Very good, very good," replied Dr. Buchanan, "most suitable for a student of theology. But, my dear sir, you have probably extended your reading in other directions. Pray, what have you been doing in general literature—poetry or philosophy, for example?" The poor fellow was quite at sea. He stared wildly; but at last, recollecting Hervey's famous "Meditations," gasped out, "'Amang the Tomes'!"

It was during his last session in Edinburgh before "taking licence" that Mr. Guthrie's father died. The very first letter of his which has been preserved is of date 1823, and is addressed to his father; in it he inquires anxiously about his failing health. But it was with all the shock of a sudden surprise to the two brothers in Edinburgh, as their lan lady's daughter remembers, that a letter reached them one day in March, 1824, to say that, if they wished to see their father in life, they must leave Edinburgh at once. The mail was gone, and they had to post all the way north to Brechin—eighty miles. The dying man lived a week after their arrival. When Dr. Guthrie was lying on his own deathbed at St. Leonard's, in February of this year (1873), (as if the circumstances—a dying father surrounded by his family, some of whom had arrived from a distance—recalled the scene at Brechin fifty years before) he spoke a great deal of his father's last days, even of the minutest details:—"I remember," he said, "after they told my father of our arrival, hearing him remark through the open door of the room where he lay, 'I'm glad the lads have come. I do not wish greatness for my sons, but that they may fear the Lord.' My father's state of mind was very blessed, though his bodily distress was so great that his laboured breathing could be heard through the whole house. That sound," Dr. Guthrie continued, "haunted me for weeks after he was gone. When lying awake at night in the silent house, I seemed distinctly to hear it. My father's death was

a terrible blow to me. At first, and for a time, I had no more heart for anything. I was most anxious to please him by success in my studies; and, when he died, I felt as if one great motive to exertion were gone."

This event, Mr. Guthrie's first great sorrow, seems to have made a deep and lasting impression on him. Eternity brought near, and the power of faith in a Saviour to sustain in nature's extremity, had a quickening effect on his own spirit. He was at this time on the eve of being licensed to preach the Gospel. His heart was awed and made tender by affliction, just when his hand was on the pulpit door.

To some readers of his Autobiography it may be matter of surprise, and to others of regret, that Dr. Guthrie has given no account there of the origin of his spiritual life, nor indicated the feelings with which he contemplated the holy ministry. The peculiar circumstances in which the Autobiography was written —making it necessarily fragmentary and incomplete —must be kept in view; but in so far as it is destitute of subjective matter, this was entirely characteristic of the writer. His faith was so buoyant, his whole mental tone so healthful, that he seemed to be freed from many of those doubts and despondencies which make up a large part of some men's religious experience. In consequence of this, he was not given to mental or spiritual analysis; nor, indeed, till his last illness, did he ever speak much of his own spiritual

history. It is true, the conversation of few men was more thoroughly seasoned with religion than his; every subject he touched upon was looked at from a religious point of view; yet he seldom originated what is ordinarily called religious conversation, and still less was he given to "open his mind" to others—to tell of the ebbs and flows of his inner life. At no period, so far as is known, did he keep any record of his spiritual experience; his journal while a student in Paris—the only journal he ever kept—contains, as will be seen when we come to quote from it, a record of his external life—no more.

Of the history of his inner life, we thus know but little. There do not appear to have been either singular or startling circumstances attending his conversion, nor did he ever indicate what special instrumentality the Spirit of God employed in leading him to a choice for Christ. His own case, however, may not improbably have been in his mind when penning the latter portion of the following passage:—

"On these subjects, the experience of saints is widely different. Some can fix the time—giving day and date, the hour, the providence, the place, the text, the preacher, and all the memorable and ever-interesting circumstances associated with their conversion. Able to trace the successive steps, and relate the whole progress of their conversion, they can say with David, 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.' It is not so, however, with all, or perhaps with most. Unconscious of the change when it began, they knew not when or how it happened. And thus, with many, the dawn of grace resembles, in more respects than one, the dawn of day. It is with the spiritual dawn of many, with the breaking of their eternal day,

with their first emotions of desire and of alarm, as with that faint and feeble streak which brightened, and widened, and spread, till it blazed into a brilliant sky." *

Neither is it possible, destined as he was from his birth to the office of the ministry, to indicate any particular time at which he made choice of that profession. So soon as he was able to determine for himself, he felt the desire of his parents that he should serve God in the Gospel to be altogether coincident with his own inclination; and, as we shall see, he adhered to this resolution amid many discouragements and the attractions of other professions. The view of the sacred ministry which he held in early, as in later life, is best expressed in his own words: — "As an ambassador for Christ, I regard a preacher of the Gospel as filling the most responsible office any mortal can occupy. His pulpit is, in my eyes, loftier than a throne; and of all professions, learned or unlearned, his, though usually in point of wealth the poorest, I esteem the most honourable. That office is one angels themselves might covet."

It was on 2nd February, 1825, that Mr. Guthrie was "licensed to preach the Gospel" by the Presbytery of Brechin.

The "Trial Discourses" prescribed to him are still in existence. It is with no little curiosity and interest one examines these yellow, faded manuscripts to see whether any distinct indications of his future power can be discerned in them. But even a partial eye detects little

* Gospel in Ezekiel, p. 287.

or nothing characteristic either in their substance or their style. They are clear, cast in a more logical mould than his more recent writings, and thoroughly evangelical; but one observes with surprise an almost total absence of figurative language. It might have been expected that the youthful compositions of a man who, even in old age, scarcely wrote a sentence which had not a pictorial allusion, would have betrayed evidence of an over-exuberant fancy; but the language is absolutely unadorned, stiff, and even formal. At this period of his life, his capacity for graphic writing was of no mean order, as will be apparent from his Paris journal, and his racy and characteristic letters of the same date; but the Presbytery sermons and lectures were doubtless composed under restraint. He feared, in presence of his ecclesiastical superiors, to transgress the rules which regulated the accepted style of pulpit address.

His first sermon as a licentiate was preached a few days thereafter, as he tells us, at Dun near Brechin, where he occupied the very pulpit from which John Knox had repeatedly thundered. Judging from the MS. of that sermon, he seems to have felt himself at greater liberty when in presence of an ordinary congregation; and, as will be seen by a specimen in the Appendix, he adopted a style more congenial to himself.

It may encourage timid beginners to know that one who became so famous a pulpit orator, did not at first realise his own gifts. When asked, not long ago, whether, in these early years, he had felt any conscious-

ness of preaching power, Dr. Guthrie replied, "No. I always felt greatly dissatisfied with my own performances; though, at the same time, when I heard some others preach, 'Well,' thought I to myself, 'I could do better than that.'" And in a letter which he wrote to a young minister in later years, speaking of his own first sermon, he says, "I remember, when I broke ground at Dun, leaving the church happy that I had not stuck. I thought that was a great step, a great achievement, and that now, having got a beginning made, I would by-and-by get on with the rest. I remember being troubled in a way you don't seem to have felt. I did not know exactly what to do with my hands, and would have felt it to be a great relief if I could, consistently with decorum, have put them in my pockets! As to my eyes, I don't know how I managed with them."

Nor were his qualifications for a pulpit orator at the outset specially apparent to others. The Rev. J. C. Burns, of Kirkliston, has furnished us with his recollections of his brother-in-law's early pulpit appearances:—

"In an old Register of Texts which I kept, and which goes back as far as the year 1825, I find the following record, under date September 25th, of that year:—

"'Brechin Church, forenoon.—Mr. Burns [my father] preached on Malachi iii. 16, 17: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," &c.

"'Afternoon.—Mr. Thomas Guthrie, preacher of the Gospel, preached from Matthew xxi. 42: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"'

"It was his first appearance as a preacher in the pulpit of his native town; and I well remember the interest which it

awakened. High expectations had been formed by his friends and acquaintances of his success, and there was a general curiosity among the people to see if he would turn out as good at preaching as he was reputed to be at everything else.

"He acquitted himself, on the whole, creditably and well. He delivered himself with ease and entire self-possession; his voice filled the old cathedral before, and even behind the pulpit, without an effort.* His sermon was lucid, scriptural, sensible, and sound; and last, not least, he had no 'paper'—he did not read a word. More than that, besides standing the ordeal of the Old Church congregation and its critics in the 'Guildry Loft,'† he was fortunate enough to win the good opinion of a worthy Old Light Antiburgher elder, an *attaché* of the family,‡ whose strict adherence to his vow against 'promiscuous hearing' prevented his going to judge for himself, but who, on credible and concurrent testimony, came to the satisfactory conclusion that 'Maister Tammas was braw'n systematic.'

"His second sermon in the same place was preached shortly after, from the text 2 Chronicles xvi. 9: 'The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.' This sermon fully sustained his reputation, if it did not increase it. But in neither of them, so far as I remember, nor in any other of those which he preached from time to time as a licentiate, did he discover the peculiar talent which afterwards made him famous. There was no genius, no poetry—very little pathos even; and the *graces*, whether of style, pronunciation, or action, were considerably neglected, if not despised. Strong, clear, pithy statement, pointed, direct appeal, and solid, evangelical doctrine, enlivened frequently by Old Testament allusions and illustrations—these were the distinguishing qualities of his preaching, which were quite sufficient to make him acceptable everywhere, but which nowhere excited anything like a *furore* in connection with him, or drew a crowd after him."

* Referring to a period shortly before this, Dr. Guthrie says in one of his recent letters:—"An old lady whom I met at Mr. Walter Burns' house in Edinburgh, when on my way to study at Paris, being asked, 'What think ye of Mr. Guthrie?' replied, 'He is a hard-favoured lad, wi' a voice like thunder!'"

† Magistrates' Gallery.

‡ John Mill, see Autobiography, page 30.

Being now eligible for a church, it might have been expected that Mr. Guthrie would not have had long to wait. Little did the strangers from all parts of the world, who left his church in Edinburgh electrified by his eloquence, and with a new idea of what a power the pulpit is, think that the preacher to whom they had been listening, was for five whole years without obtaining any settled charge. From 1825 to 1830 this was literally his case. He has himself in his Autobiography explained how this came about; lay patronage, as then exercised in Scotland, giving to a certain ecclesiastical party power to blast the prospects of such aspirants to the ministry as had independence enough to oppose their policy.

The letters he wrote home at intervals of absence during these five years of delay and disappointment indicate how keenly he felt the position in which he was placed; and had he not, through grace, been enabled to adhere to his resolution to serve God in the work of the ministry, he might, long ere these five years had run, have entered permanently on some other career.

"I have been seriously advised," he writes to his brother from London in 1827, "by a person here, connected with the law, to become an English barrister, who will ensure my success. I intend, however, to figure away before the Moderator in place of the Chancellor!"

Again, writing from Paris that same year to his sister, in reply to a letter in which she mentioned the prospect of his receiving an appointment to a church in Forfarshire (to which, however, another was presented), he

says:—"You may be sure I was very well pleased with the contents of your letter, on many accounts. I know not whether to place first its relieving my anxieties as to my circumstances and prospects, or the bright hope it holds out that the power of Moderation would one day be crushed into ruins. I owe the faction some thanks on my own account; but, if ever I get a church, I will give proof, by an unceasing day and night opposition to their plans and projects, that I owe them more on the part of the public. I never was a Moderate, but they will now find me far less so. Since I left home, and mixed in the world, my aversion to every kind either of civil or ecclesiastical tyranny has fixed down into a deep and fierce principle of hatred. I see every day in France the foul effects of absolute power, and I have learned to hate even the very semblance of it. . . . . I should be very well pleased doubtless to get a place in the Church, both that I might be of some service to the glorious and sacred cause in which I am engaged, and also for my own personal comfort. I would hail my success with no little gratitude to God. If you can consequently give me any satisfaction on the subject in your next letter, I shall be very well, if not, I shall not be too ill, pleased. Matty Paton's idea is the best I have heard for a long time, perfectly brilliant. Conceive me an itinerant preacher!"

These five years of hope deferred, however, afforded Mr. Guthrie a profitable though peculiar training for the eminent place he was afterwards to fill. His scientific studies in Edinburgh, his residence abroad, his ex-

perience of business in his father's banking-house, the leisure he enjoyed for enlarging his stores of general information, had all their influence in making him the many-sided man he became. They gave him a breadth of view and an acquaintance with the world which few ministers possess; and so, God overruled what, at the time, was a sore trial to His servant's faith and patience for His own wise ends. Writing from Arbirlot ten years thereafter to a young preacher who had been disappointed in a case of popular election, and looking back on the way by which he had himself been led, he says:—

"*Manse of Arbirlot*, 13*th August*, 1834.

"I am better here than I would have been had any of my disappointments in regard to other places turned out appointments. I had all along the best of interest, and yet had to lie five years by the pool, and when you have waited as long, I shall hand you over for comfort to ———, who waited twelve, I think; and, by-the-bye, the very way another man has got in before you, holds out a good prospect of ultimate success. It shows how strong and able to bear up a fellow the popular wave has become, and were I a preacher, I would trust more to that nowadays than to being at the head of Lord Panmure's list.

"*There* is a motive for exertion which may keep a man busy, busy day and night improving himself,—instead of laying, as I did for five years, like a log on a dead-calm sea, wearying for a breeze that would blow me into harbour. You can now ply your oars and row yourself in; and to that, my man, you, like all other preachers who have sense and sound, must set yourself with might and main. There is no saying what popular preachers some of us settled lads might have been, had we lived as preachers in these days!

"——— has tried to get into ——— by popular support, but has been nearly drowned in the surf. Though he is a pious lad, and though he was supported by the two or three farmers who have almost the whole parish in lease, yet, much to the credit of the people, it was 'no go.' He is not a popular preacher, and they would neither be cajoled nor dragooned, I suppose, into the concern."

Mr. Guthrie's temperament was not one that would allow him to remain inactive at home. Having lost, a few months after license, a presentation to one of the best livings in Scotland in the characteristic manner described in the Autobiography, and there being no immediate prospect of another, he returned to college in Edinburgh for the session of 1825-26. In that session he attended the classes of chemistry and natural history in the University, as well as that of Dr. Knox,* an "extramural" lecturer on anatomy and surgery, afterwards notorious in connection with the Burke and Hare murders.

This was an unusual step for a licentiate of the Scottish Church; but much more that which he took the following winter, when he entered himself as a student at the Sorbonne in Paris.

We have seen it stated in biographical notices of Dr. Guthrie, that his main if not exclusive object in attending medical classes in Edinburgh and Paris was with a view to his future usefulness as a country minister. This is a misapprehension. When the cause of medical missions was broached, he warmly espoused it, because he regarded medical acquirements in a foreign missionary as an invaluable adjunct in countries where medical skill is unknown, or of the rudest kind; but he had no notion of ministers at home usurping the doctor's functions, save in rare and exceptional instances. When at Arbirlot,

* So attractive was Knox as a lecturer that, in Session 1827-28, there sat on the benches beside the medical students three young men, all eminent in after years, the late Marquis of Breadalbane (then Lord Glenorchy), Principal Cunningham, and Sir George Sinclair.

indeed, he frequently prescribed for his parishioners in trifling cases; but, when his knowledge of disease convinced him that the symptoms were grave, his prescription was, "Send to Arbroath for Dr. Arrot." His main aim, therefore, in the study of medicine, was to gratify his own thirst for information, and strong natural taste for the subject. All his life long he had a liking for doctors, enjoying a talk with them in the line of their profession; and he read with avidity during his holidays in the North the current medical journals picked up in his brother's consulting-room. In fact, he knew, if possible, too much about such matters. Suffering as he did from long-standing disease of the heart, it might have been better had he understood less of the varying symptoms of his malady; and sometimes his physicians were amused, when, by the use in his presence of technical terms, they sought to communicate with one another about his case, to discover that he was quite cognizant of the matter discussed, by his occasionally interposing a remark which made that abundantly plain.

It was on his way to Paris in the autumn of 1826 that Mr. Guthrie first visited London, and got his first glimpse into the social life of the metropolis.

Writing thence to his sister Clementina in Brechin, he tells of dining one day at Mr. Joseph Hume's,* where he speaks of meeting—

"The celebrated Alderman Wood, and Canon Riego, a Spanish refugee, and brother to the celebrated Riego, whose

* M.P. for the Montrose Burghs.

whole history, I have no doubt, David's * political knowledge can give you. Besides these two, there were Wood's son, an agreeable young fellow, and a Colonel from India, whose brains had been evaporated by its burning sun, which had also turned all the fluids of his body into bile. He had been at Paris and Cheltenham, looking for health; but, not finding it, returned with a countenance as sour-like as a winter apple. I did not know what sentiments he entertained, as he only now and then uttered a doubtful grumph, which, however, I thought sounded like a Radical growl! But with the others, as you know, I was in the very centre of Whiggism; and, considering that I still have some strong leanings to the Tory side of the question, played, as I thought, my part extremely well. . . . .

"Mr. Hume has been very attentive. He gets me into the India House, Royal Society, House of Commons, &c. He has got four letters from Bowring for me, introducing me to the 'Libérales,' or Radicals, of France; one of them is the editor of the *Constitutionnel*, another the editor of the *Encyclopédie*, &c.

"Hume proposed that I should call upon Mr. Maule.† Very well, I called with Mr. H. He received me very kindly, and asked me to dinner. When H. told him I was going to France, he jocularly warned me against the priests. When we came out Mr. H. told me that, on the day I was to dine with 'His Highness,' there was to be a grand party—which made me lament over the five or six shillings I would have to pay to coachmen. Alas! they are gone, I shall never see them more; and gone to the rudest and roughest men, but boldest and ablest charioteers, I ever saw.

"However, in silk stockings and dress shoes, I set off for the west end of the town on the top of the Paddington coach—it being the cheapest mode of conveyance. . . . . I was no sooner in, and busily engaged talking with Mr. Maule, than rap, rap, rap goes the knocker, and the names of Sir John Ogilvy and Mr. Kinloch are announced. Then comes a naval officer and Provost Jameson from Montrose; and who comes next, think you? No less a personage than the Marquis of Queensberry. Mrs. Maule had before this come in, so down we sat to dinner, and passed into the dining-room through a range of powdered lacqueys. Mr. Maule was very attentive to me. The Marquis was very complaisant, for he and I had some little conversation, which he himself began; and as to the naval

* His eldest brother.

† Hon. William Maule, M.P., afterwards Lord Panmure.

officer, he was a frank, open-hearted fellow, without a spark of affectation. Tell the Doctor, who is so nice as to what is fashionable, that some of the gentlemen, both at Hume's and Maule's, came into the drawing-room with their hats in their hands, and gave them to the lacqueys as they entered the dining-room.

"I have been at Dr. Waugh's. * He is one of the finest, kindest, most primitive old men I ever saw. I have got a letter from him to Wilks,† and another to a Mr. Cowie, a most religious man; so my mother, I hope, will keep herself at ease. I have seen no religion here; they sell and buy openly upon the streets on Sunday. I was shocked the first Sabbath upon leaving my lodgings, when a fellow in the street asked me if I would buy an umbrella. When I went a little further I was asked to buy fruit.

"I shall have an immense deal to tell you when I come home. I have heard Irving,‡ and some Church of England clergymen. . . . . I was glad to hear of Wolf § being well."

As already stated, the only journal which Mr. Guthrie ever kept was penned by him in Paris during the winter of 1826 and the spring of 1827. He refers to it in one of his letters from the French capital as follows:—

"*Paris, 2nd March*, 1827.

". . . . You ask about my Journal. It has now swelled out to about thirty close-written sheets, containing a great deal of nonsense and a great deal of sense, a great deal of what may be trifling, and a great deal of what is important—in which everything is put down, good, bad, and indifferent, for my own amusement and instruction afterwards, but principally for yours at home."

* Minister of the Scotch Secession Church in London. See Autobiography, page 73.

† Rev. Mark Wilks, minister of the English Independent Church in Paris.

‡ Rev. Edward Irving.

§ A favourite dog.

This Journal Dr. Guthrie himself supposed to have been lost, and more than once, in writing his Autobiography, expressed regret that it no longer existed to refresh his memory. Hidden among a mass of valueless papers in Brechin, it only came to light the other day. It was written without the remotest thought of its ever being printed, and bears scarce any evidence of correction; but it must have been composed, as our readers will see for themselves, with studied care; and it is not unlikely that its production may have been used by Mr. Guthrie as a means of practising composition and improving his style. As one of the comparatively few productions of his early manhood which we now possess, and as containing much, not only interesting in itself, but characteristic of its author, we give longer extracts from it than we should in other circumstances have done :—

On Wednesday, 6th December, 1826, I planted my foot for the first time on the soil of France, and I could not forget (who that loves the privileges that Great Britain enjoys, or reveres the memory of the brave and good men who fell fighting in their defence, could forget ?) that the soil on which I now stood had witnessed, more than any other, the triumphant force of British arms.

* * * * *

In a small town, on our way to Paris, I met a priest who was, without exception, the most reverend-looking figure I ever saw. He was feeble and bent with the weight of years, and, when he walked, tottered slightly. He was attired all in white, excepting a black tippet on his shoulders, over which fell and curled, from beneath his black skull-cap, in rich profusion, locks of snowy whiteness. The old man had a noble brow, and there was much benevolence expressed in the look which he lifted up his bowed head to cast upon us as we passed. He was preceded by a boy, carrying a large, richly-chased silver cross, elevated on a long pole; and, as it was the first living exhibition

of Roman Catholicism I had seen here, I looked on the scene with no little interest.

* * * * *

Paris—30, *Rue Cassette.* 1826. *16th December.*— . . . I went on Sunday, through streets where almost every shop was open, to another church, called St. Etienne. I had no sooner entered its vestibule, than I heard a voice which made every arch and aisle of the mighty building sound back its tones of sorrow and of earnest pleading. Passing in, I found myself in the midst of a large assembly, who were listening with the most profound attention to a monk, who, attired in his wide black robes, with his cowl thrown back off his head, addressed the people from a pulpit placed in front of one of the pillars. His gesticulation partook of extreme violence; at one time, he spread forth his hands to the multitudes, as if appealing to them; at another, he lifted them up to heaven, as if appealing to God; while the clenched fist and sparkling eye showed now and then that from the throne of St. Peter still thundered forth the anathemas of the Church of Rome.

In returning home I passed one of the oldest Roman Catholic churches in Paris. I entered, and it was a scene of magnificent splendour. . . . . It was impossible not to admire it as a piece of show; but, as the worship of the true God, it was impossible not to abhor it.

Its effects were strikingly and appallingly illustrated on my return home. Almost close by the door of the church sat a juggler, around whom an immense crowd was collected. The streets were crowded with people amusing themselves; the shops were brilliantly lighted up; the doors of the theatre were already thrown open; the noise of business and mirth was heard in every quarter; the servants when I returned were gaily singing songs. All Paris was in arms against its God.*

* In a letter written to Brechin on 17th January, 1827, Mr. Guthrie says:—"It is on the Sabbath more than any other day that I think of you all at home: the awful scenes which obtrude themselves upon my view suggest by contrast the very different circumstances in which you all are placed. When I see the tricks of the jugglers and hear the music of the musicians, and observe the busy traffic of the merchants, and the reckless levity of the people on the Sabbath day, I think of the quiet streets of Brechin; and the stillness of our house is brought sadly to my remembrance, when I hear, in this one, the light song instead of the sacred hymn, and see, instead of the Bible, the cards and dominoes upon the table, and the people, instead of repairing to the church, driving off every Sunday night to the playhouse. I confess to you that frequently I am heartily disgusted with Paris, and wish that I were home."

27*th December.*—In walking through the streets I have been astonished by the enormous size of the dogs in Paris. The largest dogs are a species of mastiff, and, absolutely, many of them are almost the height of calves. They are much used for drawing small vans, and I have seen many of them pulling a prodigious weight. You see also dogs of the smallest size. I saw one in the Luxembourg one day—and an old, cankered-looking wretch, too, it was—at least one-half less than the smallest I ever saw in Britain; a common-sized rat would have drubbed it in a jiffey! We used to speculate at Keithock upon my bringing home a dog; and, had I been returning some weeks ago, I believe I should have bought one on the Pont Neuf. There are vast numbers of them in cages on the Pont Neuf; and those which struck my fancy were four little puppies that were suckled by a cat. I used often to stand and observe them; the little rascals were sometimes disposed to be troublesome to their more than natural mother, by sporting with her tail and biting her ears. Puss bore this patiently when she was not oppressed with sleep; but frequently, a proper blow on the side of the head with her paw made some of the little rascals whine for daring to disturb her slumbers. They seemed, however, to be very fond of each other; and, considering the character of their wet-nurse, I should have liked one of them very much.

1827. 1*st January.*—Yesterday I set off from Rue Cassette for the Church of Ste. Geneviève, to witness the splendid ceremonies of the day of the saint. The church, splendid of itself, was this day magnificently decorated. . . . . Every sense was gratified by the exhibition. Banners from whose golden tops large white ostrich feathers floated, crosses of prodigious value, dresses of amazing richness, the multitude of priests, the Archbishop with his lofty bearing, the rich tapestry, the profusion of light, and the noble building, afforded to the eye ten thousand gratifications. The silver censers diffused their aromatic fragrance; while the music now rolled like thunder, now fell upon the ear sweet and soft as an angel's song.

These gratified the senses; but, alas! there was nothing to satisfy the longings of a famished soul, or to save it from destruction. In place of bread, it was a painted stone; in place of fish, it was a poisoned serpent. Cruel fathers, and traitorous shepherds, and guilty deceivers that these priests are! Pity for the people made me burn with indignation against them;—and when I turned my eyes from a woman who knelt upon the cold stone, heaved audible and heavy sighs, shed tears in profusion from her eyes, that were mournfully fixed

upon the figure of our Saviour, and who finished her prayers and the telling of her beads by kissing the marble that was wet with the tokens of her sorrow,—when I looked from this deluded but interesting victim, to the proud Archbishop, bearing himself as high, dispensing pardon as freely, and receiving honours as great as if he were a god, I almost felt that I could, like another Melville, seize the trappings of Popery and curse them before his eyes; or, like more than another Melville, hurl the mitre from his head and trample it beneath my feet.

4th January.—Close by my boarding-house is a large building, with a beautiful garden attached to it, belonging to the Carmelite nuns, and night and day are they ringing to prayers, to my great disturbance. Farther on, you reach the gate, near which the gallant Ney was shot for treachery, of which almost every man in France was guilty. He was brought out from the Chamber of Peers, and, almost secretly, led to this spot. No monument marks the place where the brave soldier fell, but there is not a Frenchman in Paris but knows it well. He stood on one side of the road, with his back to the wall of the Luxembourg garden, while the soldiers pointed from its other side their murderous guns at his undaunted breast. The French, for long after, wrote upon the wall at the dead of night epitaphs to his memory, and then deep curses against the Bourbon family. These, every morning, were carefully erased; and now, all that points out this spot, consecrated in every Frenchman's eyes, is a long black line drawn upon the wall.

* * * * *

My teacher, old Count Robiano,* was here to-day, bowing and scraping as usual. He began by asking me if I was to go to Mademoiselle Lafond's *soirée*? I soon satisfied him upon that subject; and began another with him, which he loved much less,—questioning him regarding difficulties in the French language. And I did torment the old rascal with amusing satisfaction! I abhor the old wretch on account of his vicious character; and he abhors me on account of my questioning one. Of this he has complained to one of my acquaintances, telling him that I was a terrible fellow. He is, I suppose, near seventy; a little man, with the long, sharp, half-Roman nose of a Frenchman; with grey hairs, feeble and bent body—acquired partly by his dissipated habits, partly by old age, and partly by the length of time he has practised the bowing and bending manners of a Frenchman.

8th January.—The other night we had tea in Heddle's

* See Autobiography, page 83.

room. . . . . Heddle* told an anecdote so creditable to the Duke of Kent that I resolved to record it. There can be no doubt of its truth, as he is acquainted with the person concerned, and also with his friends.

There lived in Orkney a minister who had two sons; and to procure a church for one of them was the utmost he could do. The other thought of entering the army; but then he had not one friend in the world to procure him a commission. The case was desperate, and it forced him to a desperate remedy. He formed the bold and original resolution of addressing himself to the Duke of Kent. He penned a letter to the Duke, which must, from the happy result of it, have no doubt been ably written. It was posted silently and secretly; and in a short time the postman brought a letter to him written by the Duke's secretary, saying that he was commanded by the Duke to desire him immediately to come up to him. In doing so he lost no time; and at last found himself in the room where the Duke's secretary was sitting. He had sent in his card to the Duke; and, when commanded to appear before him, he passed the secretary, who said to him, "If the Duke ask you what regiment you would prefer, say that you would prefer his own." The young Orcadian at last stood in the presence of Kent, who took him by the hand and received him in that kind, frank, and protecting manner which he says he will never forget. The Duke then asked him in what regiment he would like to be. Like a *canny* Scotchman, he took care to profit by the hint of the secretary; and in a few days received an appointment in the Duke's Own.

Peace, peace to the manes of Kent! an act like this of secret, private feeling, and honourable generosity, does more honour to his memory, than though the names of a thousand victorious fields were inscribed upon his tomb.

12*th January.*—Morning and evening I work. Instead of sitting up late at night, I now labour in the morning, as less injurious to health—so, at least, people say. But I have another and a stronger reason,—it saves wood. I go to bed about twelve; and by means of a *fumade* (for which I paid ten sous, and should only have paid eight), I light my candle, and read and write in my bed, until I can do so by the daylight. I thus save two hours of fire; for I determine not to sleep above six hours—in fact, I frequently have not above five.

As to French, I find myself making considerable pro-

* A Scotch medical student, who boarded in the same pension with Mr. Guthrie.

gress; but in understanding the professors, I am still far behind. Of many whole sentences I can only form a very imperfect idea; while it is only now and then (and by such attention as a company assembled after a funeral to hear the will read, give to the lawyer when he unfolds its interesting details) that I can follow them.

I sometimes almost despair; and am like a shipwrecked sailor who is buffeting the roaring waves, and would cease to struggle with the danger did he look only at the distance he is still from the blessed shore, and did he not turn his head to mark, with gladsome heart and brighter hopes, the progress already made from the wreck of the fated vessel.

15*th January*.—The weather very changeable—slight frosts frequently in the morning, a fine clear forenoon, and slight rain at night.

I yesterday expected, and to my great pleasure received, when at breakfast, a letter from Clementina.*

When I had finished reading it I departed for the French Protestant Church, where I met Everett.† . . .

After the precentor or clerk, who by-the-bye wears bands, had read two chapters and sung as many psalms (a custom which, I think, was at one time common in the Church of Scotland), the minister appeared. He was an old, dark-complexioned, sour-looking man, with a white powdered wig upon his head. The worship was conducted in a way very similar to ours. I had heard him once before, and I was sorry to find that I had no reason to change the opinion which I then formed of him. His prayers were grievously dry, and, being so, agreeably short. As to his sermon, it was quite in the style of Blair and the Church of England orations,—an attack upon the riches and honours of the world; while the old man, at the same time, took the best of all care in the arrangement of his gown, to show to me and others that he was decorated with the Cross of St. Louis. This little inconsistency I could, however, have passed over if the sermon had been evangelical; but it was not. The way of redemption was hardly noticed; the name of Jesus Christ he did not mention throughout his discourse. Still, a few traits of the piety and purity of the original Church were to be seen; they stood like the ruins of a once noble building—a few melancholy pillars which had survived the general wreck, monuments of the dead. I allude, among other things, to the admirable, and profitable, and serious-like custom

* His sister.

† See Autobiography, page 84.

of reading and singing while the congregation are collecting, and to the preface which both precentor and minister employed before beginning the different parts of their work: —"Give your devout and religious attention," &c. . . . .

The French are fond of acting or spouting their sermons,—shutting their eyes, turning them up to heaven, and cutting such capers with their hands, and throwing such tones into their voice as an actor does on the stage. I have now heard two Protestant French ministers, but none of them can, in point of touching fervour, and real unfeigned, enthusiasm, compare with the cowled monk I heard in St. Etienne.

* * * * *

Everett is the only one among the young fellows here who seems to have any religious principle; and he appears, from his conversation, to have read and pondered seriously many religious books. I intend to cultivate his acquaintance, for it is a great but a rare pleasure here to meet a person who wears even the semblance of religious principle.

Most of the English leave all their profession of religion behind them; and the great body of the French are avowed infidels—believing in no God except some Being of their own fancy's creation, for whom, at any rate, they have neither love nor fear. They feel no shame, but glory to declare this; and when asked what religion they profess, they will say "Oh, we are Roman Catholics to appearance. If, however, we saw any necessity for changing (which we do not, as it is all the same to us), we would become Protestants."

They never live for to-morrow, and think that a day spent without amusement is a day lost. Those of them who have been in London complain that it is insufferably dull. Almost every evening, Madame St. Marc* and the ladies, along with even the French fellows who profess to be students, spend either at the card-table or theatre. They would soon measure the depth of the Seine if doomed to the intolerable fate of spending the forenight [evening] in quietly and tranquilly reading a book in their own rooms.

I was once disposed to think the French an honest people; but since they have played some of their swindling tricks upon myself, I have widely changed my opinion. . . . . I could relate a multitude of such cases, but it would be a useless waste of paper to insert them; and so I shall conclude this subject by remarking, that I neither like French weather nor French ways, French men nor French manners.

* See Autobiography, page 81.

The interesting episode of Mr. Guthrie's acquaintance with a Jesuit seminarist is alluded to in the Autobiography.* He mentions him for the first time in a letter to his sister Clementina, dated 17th January, 1827, where he says:—

"But I hasten to introduce to your notice Monsieur Fevrier. He is my principal companion, and generally spends the whole forenight in my room. You are doubtless anxious to know what he is—well, I will tell you. My chief companion is neither more nor less than a Jésuit! Tell John Mill† that, and his eyes will start out of his head; and Meggy Stewart will take another pinch of the brown snuff, and say, she does not believe it! It is, however, true. He is not exactly a priest, though he was educated amongst them, and tells me that he has preached; and I assure you he does not disgrace the Jesuits. He is a very clever, and, what is better, a very good man. If you knew Fevrier, Jesuit as he is, you would esteem him highly, and see in him ten thousand points of admiration. He is a lad of most rigid principle, and condemns loudly the vices of the French—and that, everywhere, without fear. Roman Catholic as he is, would to God that all Protestants were like him.

"He has come from Lyons, for the purpose of obtaining a situation as Latin teacher—a language which he speaks with ease. He is very poor, I fear; and his wasted hands, and the flushing of his pale countenance look as if he were fast sinking into consumption. I feel sorry to think that Fevrier should be a Catholic, and have repeatedly attempted to bring him to a conversation upon the merits of his Church; and almost as repeatedly he has eluded me. He seems to be quite restless when I direct the conversation in that channel; looks at me sometimes when I am drawing to the point with a countenance in which suspicion is strongly marked; his dark face expresses extreme anxiety, and I see fear evidently lurking in the sidelong looks with which he casts his black eyes upon me. I am thus obliged to act with extreme caution; otherwise, I doubt not, Fevrier would at once dissolve acquaintanceship. The difficulty is, to get the subject introduced apparently without intention."

* Page 87.

† An elder of the Anti-Burgher Church in Brechin. See page 30 of Autobiography.

Such an opportunity occurred three days later; for we find Mr. Guthrie thus writing in the Journal, which we now resume:—

1827. 21*st January*.—Last night, about half-past nine, Fevrier entered my room and took his usual seat close by the stove, with a foot on each side of it and his body inclining above, while his hands were placed upon its top. He began to tell me of some conversation which had been carried on in the lodge, which somehow or other led me to remark that Theophilus did not seem to hold confession in much respect. This led me to ask how often it was necessary to make confession; until the conversation at last gave me an opportunity of denying the necessity or propriety of Roman Catholic confession, which was answered on Fevrier's part by a scowl of horror, an expression of surprise at my ignorance, and a loud and violent asseveration of its pre-eminent necessity. I told him calmly that his asseveration (any more than the asseverations of his priests) was not sufficient, and that he must prove it. He then began some rigmarole story about Mother Church, to which I replied that I did not give a fig for the opinions of Mother Church, nor of any other body of fallible men, and that my only authority was "that book" (giving a slap on the boards of the French Bible which I had taken up from the table). Holding out the Bible to him, "Prove," said I, "the doctrine from the words of Divine Revelation, and I will believe it." I maintained that I was as well able as the priests to declare, that, if he believed in Christ, his sins would be forgiven; and that the priests, in this respect, were on a level with myself—fallible, as he could not deny that they were, and sinners, as he could not deny that they were. I dared him to prove that they were, in any one respect, more warranted to make such a declaration than myself.

At this, Fevrier's passion (which had been awakened shortly after the commencement, and increased as the discussion proceeded) became perfectly ungovernable. Every limb of his body shook with rage; he foamed at the mouth, and, with eyes full of fury, he clenched his fist, and, extending his arm, thrust it almost into my face, while he forced out from his choking throat and set teeth something about me (by comparing myself with the priests) having committed an act of high and impious presumption.

It was now half-past twelve, and the whole house was buried in sleep; while I sat alone in a room, the object of a Roman Catholic's and a Jesuit's fury, who glared upon me as if he

could have thrust a dagger in my heart. The idea of danger rushed upon my mind; for, more than once, Fevrier looked as if ready to deal out to me something harder than his arguments. But, secure in the consciousness of my own personal strength, I knew I could easily master him; and, wrapped in my cloak, I lay back in my chair, coolly watching his motions, and calmly eyeing him during this violent burst of rage.

When he seemed to have exhausted himself, and sat frowning like a demon upon me, I, with a calmness and self-possession which astonished myself, sat up erect on my seat, and, taking the Bible in my hand, held it up, while I fixed my eye steadily upon him, and said, "Behold, Monsieur, the only authority which I acknowledge, the only authority which, independent of the whole Roman Catholic Church, you ought to acknowledge. That book claims a divine origin; and I defy all the priests on earth to prove that, to use its own language, it is not all 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.'"

He, in a few minutes, again renewed the combat, by quoting a Latin passage, and calling upon me to reply to it. I said I should willingly do so when he showed me the impression in the sacred writings; and, putting the Bible in his hands, "Show me it," said I, "Monsieur." He sat at least a quarter of an hour silently looking for it, during which I sat looking him in the face; and observing his strongly-marked chagrin upon not finding it, I at last said to him, "You need look no longer, it is not there; and though it were, depend upon it you give a false meaning to it, because we never read of a single case where the Apostles took upon them to say that they forgave sins. And besides," said I, "Monsieur, I dare you to show me one single, one solitary passage from this end" (striking the one side of the Bible) "of the word of God, to that" (giving the other side a sounding blow), "where confession to priests, penance, or anything of the kind, is inculcated, or in the slightest degree acknowledged;" and putting the Bible in his hands again, I said, "One passage, Monsieur, one solitary passage, I defy you to produce."

In a short time he gave a loud and scornful laugh of triumph, and I wondered what upon earth the fellow could have stumbled upon. With an air of as much joy and pride as if he had just returned to this earth, and brought with him from heaven a charter constituting the Pope and his councils the true representatives of God upon earth, he pointed to a chapter in Matthew, and read aloud a verse where Christ promises to give to his disciples the power of casting out devils. I could not

resist asking, with a stare in which irony and astonishment were blended, "What of that? It is true; but what has that do with the matter?" . . . . Having the Bible in his hand, he began again to fumble in it for his priest-born quotation; and after another quarter, with as little success as formerly, I told him again that it was not there, and that he must seek for it somewhere else; and that, moreover, as it was now well on to two in the morning, he must defer his search to another opportunity.

Shortly after this we bade each other *bon soir*; and I went to my bed, hoping that the discussion might, through God's blessing, prove of some benefit to him, well pleased that I had maintained throughout such command of my feelings (never having, for four or five hours' close debate, lost temper but once, and that only for a moment), and grateful to Dr. Chalmers for having aided me effectually in finding apt quotations by his book of references.

22*nd January*.—Yesterday morning I was engaged with my coffee in the *salle à manger*, when Fevrier entered. He bowed rather coldly to me, and the cloud was on his brow. I was pleased to see that he felt chagrined at the result of last night's discussion; and in proof that his belief in the infallibility of the Roman Catholic dogmas was rather shaken, he had no sooner entered than he told Madame of the debate (she, by-the-bye, cares no more for the differences between Roman Catholic and Protestant, than she does about those which doubtless subsist amongst the inhabitants of the moon), and, apparently not confirmed in the belief of his own opinions, asked her if she thought he was right. . . . .

I then set off for Mark Wilks' service, which is held in a part of the Oratoire. The preacher was a Mr. Hodge,* an American professor, who had come to Europe for the purpose of studying the Oriental languages. He intended to do so in Germany, but was at present studying French in Paris, as a medium of communication with the Germans. He was a young-like, intelligent, fair, good-looking, thin, and rather little man; and gave us a capital sermon from the 19th verse of the fifth chapter of 1 John. The singing was very beautiful. The English sounded most sweetly and pleasantly to my ear. It brought vividly before my mind's eye memories of my native land; while the smallness of the numbers, the upper room in which we were met, the irreligious and idolatrous

* The Rev. Charles Hodge, D.D., now Professor of Theology in the Princeton Theological Seminary, United States.

country in which we were maintaining the pious worship of God, reminded me of the infant state of the Christian Church.

On returning to Rue Cassette, and entering the porter's lodge, I was well pleased to see Fevrier sitting with a New Testament in his hand, searching for his mighty passage; it showed that he doubted. After dinner, I went for my candle, when Fevrier came in; we had no opportunity of speaking since the debate. I asked him some question. He came up, took me affectionately by the hand, and clapping me on the shoulder, called me "*bon enfant*" (an expression of kindness among the French). I asked him to come up at night, which he did. He never spoke of Saturday night's discussion, neither did I, intending to wait a day or two for precaution's sake. He is off to-day to visit his friend, the head of the La Charité nuns; and I am expecting that he will come with her explanation of the difficulty. WELL, LET THEM ALL COME ON!

24*th January*.—Some days ago we had the "Jour des Rois"—the day of the kings. Who these kings were I could not possibly divine; until told by Fevrier (with astonishment on his part at my ignorance, and amazement on mine at his credulity) that these kings were the Magi, who came from the East to worship our God. "Kings!" I could not help saying, "kings, Monsieur! Who made them kings? I am pretty sure that, in the only book which gives us any account of them, we hear nothing of their Royal Majesties." Monsieur Fevrier had nothing to say; and so the subject dropped. I do believe that if the Council of Trent had declared that the Apostle Peter was Khan of Tartary or Dey of Algiers, the people would have swallowed the camel-sized, the mountainous falsehood without a single strain. It would have slid down their throats as smoothly as an oyster!

But I forgot to mention the custom prevalent through all France, which alone induced me to notice this day of Roman Catholic kings. At dinner, in the middle of the table, there was placed a large cake or *gateau*, as they call it. Inside this is placed a nut or kernel. The cake is cut into as many pieces as there are people at table. Every person must take a piece; and he in whose piece the nut is found is constituted king of the company. He must choose from the ladies a queen, and present the company with a repast. I was informed of all this before the cake was sent round; so I resolved to be out of the scrape, and accordingly arranged with Heddle that, if the stone fell to the share of either of us, we would swallow it! Heddle and I having calmed our anxieties with this magnanimous resolu-

tion, we began to speculate upon the fun we would enjoy if it fell to the lot of Boots;* and, strange to say (to our loud laughter and unbounded joy), it did! I could hardly regain my gravity, and, as the laughter grew louder, Boots appeared, from his looks, to be in a perfect perplexity whether to laugh, to get angry, or to become abashed. He at last decided for the second, and childishly angry he became, and his nose, ay, to its very point, grew furiously red—like some strange and portentous meteor in the heavens, that bodes ill to man. Fierce grew his face, and bright was the fire of his dark rolling *ee*, when I said that had I had the happiness to have been elected king, I would have done what I would advise him now to do—to choose no other than Mademoiselle Hiver† herself,—ay, none else than the lantern-jawed, gaunt, and bony (not bonny) Mademoiselle Hiver—aged, I suppose, about fifty! Boots would not choose: though we got him at last convinced that he must give a supper, and he growled like a bear over the anticipated loss of his forty francs.

31*st January*.—I have seen and conversed with a number of old soldiers, and, in fact, every man almost in France seems to have been a soldier; and it is really laughable to a person who knows anything about the history of the last twenty years, to hear them still ranting about their invincible prowess, and their glorious immortality. One would believe, from their conversation, that the King of France was sole emperor of the earth, not even excepting the dominions of the late Pomare of Otaheite; and that the honour of France, instead of having been torn to tatters by the Lion of Britain, ay, on every soil, had waved triumphant over us, the "proud islanders," as we are called.

A friend of Adolphe St. Marc's and I had a regular set-to for at least an hour and a half upon these subjects.

I stood stoutly up for my country against them both; though I did not go so far as Richie Moniplies, in thinking that a lie, though bad enough in other cases, redounded much to one's

* A young Englishman, who resided in the pension with Mr. Guthrie, and of whom he says in another part of his Journal:—"Boots would wade through fire and water for a full dinner. There is nothing on earth would persuade him to march up to the cannon's mouth, but roast beef and plum pudding. But, place inside the breach a full, smoking dish, sufficiently visible through the fire and dust and smoke of the deadly conflict, and Boots would fearlessly dash on, sword in hand, for the reeking prize!" See also Autobiography, page 85.

† See Autobiography, page 82.

credit when told in praise of one's native land. Still, I do not wonder much that Richie, blessed with no very acute moral sensibilities, should have held and acted upon this maxim. I never felt more national pride, or more mental gratification, than when I have stood amongst a band of Frenchmen, and, in reply to their weak attacks upon my country, bade them look to our character, to our riches, to the extent of our dominions, to our navy riding triumphant on the waves of every sea, to our ensigns planted in every quarter of the globe, to the history of the last twenty-six years, filled with a series of our own past successful battles, terminated on the land by Waterloo, and on the sea by Trafalgar.

Adèle* has left this house from an unfortunate quarrel with Madame St. Marc, who is a heartless sinner, and was horribly harsh to her. Adèle came in the other morning and said, "Ah! Monsieur Thomas, I have come to bid you adieu. I am only sorry to leave you, and Monsieur Heddle and Monsieur Fevrier. I do esteem you very highly. My countrymen are bad, very bad, using bad words and committing bad actions; but your conversation has always been good, and your conduct has been always well principled; though a stranger and a foreigner, you have been always very kind to me. When you return to your native land, you will sometimes remember Adèle." And with the tears streaming from her eyes, she went out of the room, and before she shut the door, again looked in and said, "Adieu, Monsieur Thomas, adieu." I have not felt so sorry this long, long time. It is no common pleasure to find one virtuous person with whom one can converse. We think little of virtue and principle in Britain, but here, where it is rarely to be found, one accounts it a brighter gem.

2nd February.—Paris is the best place in the world for pursuing any science, saving those of morality and religion. As to everything else, Paris possesses prodigious advantages. You have lectures on every subject, and that gratis—excepting in a few cases, when you have to pay a trifle of "Inscription," or matriculation, which I think you have to do at the *Ecole de Médecine.* It amounts to about twenty shillings, or something of that kind.

While there are lectures on every subject, these are delivered by the first men. Their mode of election in Paris is admirable. The professors meet in a hall open to the public; and instead of examining the different candidates for a chair, they, the candidates, examine each other, and in Latin too, I think. The

* See Autobiography, page 87.

candidates will consequently take care, if they are blessed with the shadow of common sense, that such a thing as formal and superficial examinations shall be unknown in France (unless when the sounds of our Northern doings happen to come so far south), and the law of the land takes care that there shall be no such thing as closet or back-stairs' transactions. Hereditary chairs are, consequently, unknown, unless the son can prove by the trial of a public examination, carried on by the merciless heads and hearts of his opponents, that he inherits his father's pre-eminent abilities. Such an animal as —— would astonish the French; and my friend Geoffroi St. Hilaire would, I suspect, find some difficulty in assigning him his proper place amongst human monsters!

* * * * *

9th February. Hôtel de l'Etoile du Nord. Quai St. Michel. — On Wednesday evening I dined for the last time in 30, Rue Cassette. Heddle and I rather mournfully shared our last bottle of wine; for, though I cared not a fig for the people, yet I had formed something like an attachment to the walls of my little room, to the humble stove which had so often warmed me with its heat, and once nearly killed me with its carbonic acid; and to the plain little oaken table, beside which I had passed many a happy, many a melancholy, and many a studious hour. There was also the sad idea of parting with Heddle, who was very kind to me when I arrived, a total stranger, in Paris; to whom Scotland was as dear as it was to me, and with whom I had often indulged in sweet reminiscences of the virtue and the valour, the honesty and uprightness of my native land. And to Boots, also, I had to bid farewell, who had afforded us such a fund of amusement, and who, with his many boyish faults, was yet a downright and good-hearted fellow. . . .

I bade farewell to a house to which Bonaparte, at one time, had daily gone, and where many of the scenes of the Revolution were planned; to a street celebrated last autumn for the assassinations which were perpetrated within its bounds; and to the bell of the Carmelite convent which had so often, and so early, rung me to my books and studies, as it had the nuns, my next neighbours (whom, however, I had never the pleasure of seeing), to their penances and prayers.

I am now in the Hôtel de l'Etoile du Nord, which is neither more nor less than a large lodging-house. In this one there are about thirty rooms, almost all full. Everett, a Frenchman, and I breakfast with the people of the house. The Frenchman is a very intelligent fellow, who, like all the Frenchmen I have

seen, has read Walter Scott's novels in French, and has, moreover, read many English books in the English language. He writes for the periodicals, and is, according to Everett, an atheist; so that I expect before leaving Paris to have some tough battles with him. There is in the house a grandmother (to begin, like an Irishman, at the beginning); a father, who is an industrious old boy, that by his own economy and labour has built the hôtel; a mother, who, like the father, is a very pleasant sort of person; then there comes a family of daughters, without one son, none of whom have any great claims, whatever their pretensions may be, to beauty. From what I have seen of them, and from Everett's report, they are very pleasant, modest, polite, well-behaved girls, who are, in fact, less Frenchified than any of the inhabitants of Paris I have yet seen. The *salle*, where we breakfast, is on the ground floor, and there I sit and converse ordinarily an hour every morning. At night again, before lighting my fire, I spend another hour there. The girls are sewing; the mother, her oldest daughter (who is married), and old granny, are seated round the stove; papa, with his cap on his head, is pacing about the room; while, in one corner, two or three Italians are pouring forth the smooth and oily streams of their native tongue; in another, two or three Frenchmen are debating upon the probability of a Revolution, and I am generally among these politicians; in another, a club of Englishmen are slurring over the *r*'s; while, above these motley sounds, rises the strong and musical voice of a Welshman, who had studied in Edinburgh, and who is making the room ring to the tune and words of "Will ye go, lassie, go to the braes o' Balquidder?"

11*th February*.—This morning, about eleven, I left my lodgings for the Champs Elysées to hear Way, an English preacher, of whom Boots had spoken in high terms,—though, if I had been to judge from the effects it had upon Boots, I would have been led to form but a poor opinion of his talents; for Boots acknowledged that, after the worship was concluded, he treated himself with a sight of the bear and dog-baiting at the Place des Combats. . . .

Having procured a seat with difficulty, I sat down beside my old friend Boots, who recognised me with a smile and a nod, and had hardly got myself arranged when I was struck with the preacher's loud defiance to all atheists, infidels, Socinians, and scoffers at the Gospel, to prove the contrary of what he maintained.

I thought I had fallen on my feet now, and so set myself for profound attention, which was immediately fixed by the preacher

declaring,—in the tones of a man who is maintaining the truth,—the object he had always had in view in what he had preached, wrought, and written. Then, striking on the Bible which lay before him (for he had no paper), "I find these doctrines there;" and then, beating his breast, "I have felt them in my own heart!"

Having, in proof of some position or another, referred to the case of Philip and the eunuch, he said, "Ay, it would be well that we followed the example of this eunuch—that, when travelling from one city to another, we employed ourselves in reading the Scriptures."

I was so well pleased with this touch, that I took out my box for a snuff, and made such a horrid noise (the people paying such profound attention) that I had three or four real British faces instantly fixed in wonderment on me. I, however, no ways abashed, took my pinch, quite delighted with my situation; and in a little time heard him declare that the end of all things was near at hand; that at present, as in the time of righteous Noah, the world was lying in wickedness, and particularly the cities of continental Europe; that, as the ante-diluvian inhabitants asked where were the waters that were to float the mighty bark which was built on the dry and solid earth, so the scoffers and practical infidels of our day now ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?" Then, raising himself up, and, prophet-like, stretching out his arm, he declared, "He shall come like a thief in the night. The very waters which once rolled their mighty tide over this earth shall be decomposed, and shall then roll over you, scoffers and worldly men and unbelievers, their flood of devouring fire!"

Way's sermon was most decidedly orthodox, and ably conceived and executed. He is rather eccentric in his manner of expressing himself, and too much given to fanciful speculations upon the prophecies of the Apocalypse. He seems to be infected with the same disease as Edward Irving—a mania of prophecy-interpreting, from which I cannot see the probability of any good results. In spite of these minor faults, Lewis Way occupies, with great glory to God and great honour to himself, this most important ground. To send such men as —— here, is worse than an error. We must have such men as Chalmers, or Thomson, or Gordon—men not only sound in principle, but giants in intellect; none of your milk-and-water, commonplace, old-wife, drivelling fellows, who were fitted by nature to weave no web but an Osnaburg, to figure on no board but a tailor's; but men who, animated with divine enthusiasm, can grapple, by their talents, with the champions of infidelity,

and rouse, by their stirring eloquence, the latent passions of the soul.

16*th February.*—I entered one day the large and old church of St. Eustache; and there I saw for the first time the relics which the prêtres pretend to hold, and the ignorant multitude do regard with much superstitious reverence.

Had they been anywhere but where they were, I might have regarded them with hallowed reverence,—as having formed a part and portion of the men who shed the light of religion on earth, and have for ages, with the crown of martyrdom on their heads, shone on high as the stars in the firmament of heaven. But I knew that no dependence could be placed on these Roman Catholic legends; and that, moreover, these relics (though they had been collected from the ashes of the martyr at the foot of the stake) were now rendered by the priests subservient only to maintain the human mind in a state of brutal ignorance, and thus to counteract the very object for which Eustache and his companions had gone joyfully to the death. And I knew that the martyrs, were they to rest for a moment on this earth, in passing on some message of heaven from one bright world to another, would be the first to cast their relics in the fire, and disperse the dust on the wings of the winds of heaven.

* * * * *

The cat-like manner in which they bury the poor here, beats anything I ever saw.

One day, when walking in the Boulevard, I followed the strange-looking hearse in which they are carried, not to their grave, but trench. It has a black-painted top, with black boards along the sides hardly high enough to keep the coffin in. On the dickey sits an old, wasted skeleton of a little figure, with a prodigious cocked hat upon his head, while his clothes, which had in ages past been black, have been bleached by the united efforts of many a sun and many a shower, into the less mourning colour of dirty grey. He, with the body and the hearse, are drawn by two miserable black nags,—the one probably blind in one eye, a defect, however, balanced, on the part of the other, by its being lamed in one leg. I followed this machine, immediately behind five or six women and two men who seemed to be mourners.

We at last arrived at the churchyard, about the middle of which the vehicle stopped, and two men coming up, out with the coffin upon their shoulders. Setting off at a round trot, they almost distanced me, who was looking for a moment at the spirit the old charioteer and his horses had plucked up; for no

sooner had he got free of his load, than crack went the whip, and off went the horses through the churchyard in a style that bore some resemblance to a gallop.

I got up to the people with the coffin, just as they had arrived at the place where it was to be laid. This place was no other than a long trench or ditch of sufficient breadth to permit two coffins to lie across it. No sooner was the coffin laid in its place, than a new and affecting and more human-like scene presented itself. On the earth thrown out of the trench, on which I and the women stood, they all fell at once on their knees, and with eyes from some of which the big tears rolled, now directed down upon the poor and lowly coffin, now to the bright blue sky overhead, they remained for three or four minutes in prayer—offered in especial, doubtless, for the soul of the deceased. One by one they rose; and after one of them in particular had taken a long, last, sad, lingering look down into the trench, they slowly departed in a body.

19*th February.*—The other Thursday, after many previous attempts to find Monsieur Jean-Baptiste Say, the great political-economist, I at last succeeded in seeing him. My letter of introduction was from Joseph Hume. . . . I went cheerily along, with the expectation of finding Monsieur Say in his study; and, as I knew he could speak English, jawing to him with ease in my native tongue.

It will not be easy, then, to conceive my disappointment and my unmeasured amazement when the servant girl, opening the door, ushered me into a room, where Monsieur Say, Madame, and the two demoiselles were at breakfast. During the time I occupied in making a most polite bow to the company,—who had half-started from their chairs at my towering appearance, and were gazing upon me in mute astonishment,—said I to myself, "This is a real ugly job: I have got into a pretty scrape." I had never attempted to murder the language of His Most Christian Majesty's dominions but in the easy presence of students, the vulgar presence of servants, and the ugly presence of Madame St. Marc. "But what now, Tom, art thou to do" thought I (as I sat down in the chair to which Monsieur Say pointed), "before these showy, polished, fine-looking demoiselles? To sit mute I must not, to speak good French I cannot. I am between the horns of a dilemma, and upon the one or the other I must gore myself!"

While I sat, now surveying the lining of my hat, now giving it a rotatory motion upon my leg (as if employed in the process of hat-dressing), now regarding Monsieur Say reading the letter, now stealing a glance at the demoiselles—

whom my eye sometimes caught stealing a glance at me—and ruminating, amid the solemn silence, upon my most awkward situation, a ray of hope shot across the darkness. Thought I, "I'll make Monsieur Say speak English by doing so to him; and as to Madame, why, she may count her fingers; while, as to the young ladies, they and I will express our mutual friendship and admiration by the language of signs!"

So, seizing the moment when Monsieur had finished his perusal, I out with a good English sentence, in the shape of an apology for not delivering my letter sooner. The conversation had proceeded a little; and, though I saw Monsieur Say labouring under considerable difficulty in expressing himself, I had no pity for him, and had just begun to congratulate myself on my circumstances, when I was at once, and without any warning, obliged to shift for myself the best way I could, by Madame putting down her cup of tea, and, in French, asking me if I knew much of the language!

The cunning of Ulysses could not have helped him here; and so, resigning myself to my fate, I answered her in French. This produced another question on her part, and necessarily another answer on mine. Monsieur Say then joined the conversation, and Mademoiselle Say (for the other did not speak any) then used her pretty pipe; and, somehow or another, cheered and encouraged by her smiles, I succeeded in conversing with the fine-looking demoiselle with a comparative facility at which I myself was immeasurably astonished.

Monsieur then went out of the room to write a letter of introduction for me to the Librarian of the "Institute," that I might be permitted to "assist" at its sittings,—not going there merely as a stranger, but to mix with its members. This, Brutin tells me, is a great and honourable advantage.

I was holding forth in an unabashed, amazingly good, but still blundering style, when Monsieur returned; and after being asked to attend the *soirées* (at which tea is given, and which are held every Wednesday night), I made my politest bows and withdrew; thanking Monsieur for his kindness, pleased with Madame, delighted with the demoiselle, and marvellously astonished at myself!

21*st February*.—Having been accustomed to give in Edinburgh so much to the beggars, I resolved, when I came here, to resist, though much against my heart, every application of the kind; and have never broken my resolve, except in three cases:—

The first sou I threw in the cup of a blind man, which a dog, holding it in its teeth, presented to me. The dog stood

holding the cup so patiently, and looked up to me with such meek entreaty in his honest face, that my hand dived into my pocket, and the sou rattled in the cup before I was aware that I had transgressed my law. . . . .

The third sou was fairly charmed out of my pocket by the necromantic smiles of a Savoyard girl. The little elf might be about nine years of age. After I had passed, with a heart of stone, two or three of her mates who had arranged themselves along the street, it came to her turn to assail me. Instead of beginning the attack, as ours at home do, by a doleful groan and piteous face, she, as the boys and girls do here, said with a smile, which my weakness proved to be far more witching, "*Ah, Monsieur, bon Monsieur, donnez-moi quelque chose!*" As I am irresistibly disposed to smile in return (the dangerous effects of which this case taught me), I now always make my heels my friend, and get out of the way of temptation as fast as possible. However, then, I unfortunately happened to smile in return. Seeing this, and judging that I was not altogether adamantine, she redoubled her battery; and smiling and laughing, she ran backwards before me along the street, until I at last gave in, giving her the sou, and laughing at my own folly.

* * * * *

26*th February*.—Heard to-day another proof of the absolute and tyrannical character of the French Government. Improbable as it may appear to a freeman of Great Britain, not more than twenty men, except when there are females also, dare to meet together to sit down to dinner!

At present the Bourbons may well tremble on the throne, unless they introduce a speedy and a radical change into their system of government. The people are as anxious for a revolution as the priests are opposed to it, and by their present measures paving the way for it. This bold attempt * against the liberty of the subject, in the ministerial, or rather the priestly attacks upon the liberty of the press, has alienated almost every man from the present reigning family; and knowing, as the people do, that the priesthood is at the bottom of all these conspiracies against their privileges, they hate them from the heart; and do not hesitate to say (though they

* The allusion is to the fatal efforts of Charles X. to establish a censorship of the press. These proved successful in November, 1827; but the disbanding of the National Guard in April of the same year, was the first of a series of events which terminated, in 1830, in the banishment of the King, and the offer of the Crown to the Duke of Orleans (Louis Philippe.)

have no religion themselves, but in the knowledge that a religion will always subsist), "Ah, Britain is happy in having a Protestant religion; we wish we had the same."

Fevrier abhors the Bourbon Government, and dwells sweetly and sadly upon the memory, as they call him, of Napoleon the Great. I was walking with him to-day in the Luxembourg Gardens, and began, in too plain French, and in too loud a voice, such a hearty invective against the wretched Bourbons, that I forgot altogether where I was, until Fevrier, pointing to the soldiers who stood almost close by us, whispered in my ear something about "*espions!*" (spies.) I took the hint, and we immediately shifted ground.

25th March.—A very melancholy circumstance lately occurred, which threw a gloom for some days over my acquaintances. . . . . Hay was not a personal acquaintance of mine; but I have frequently heard Heddle, Armstrong, and Taylor * (almost his only friends here) speak of him. He had a considerable property in Scotland; and, being of a peculiar disposition, had wandered almost alone for years upon the Continent, attended only by a Swiss servant.

Heddle, Armstrong, and Taylor called upon him on Sunday night; they found him in bed, complaining of his throat and a slight general illness.

Though they counted it as nothing, still, as they knew that he was very careless of himself, two of them resolved to go and see him on Monday. Taylor and Armstrong called accordingly, were ushered into his room, and there lay poor Hay, —whom they had seen in almost perfect health the night before, and whom they expected to find completely recovered—stretched upon his bed speechless and motionless, and fast sinking into dissolution. The unexpected and appalling spectacle rivetted them for a moment on the threshold of the door, when Armstrong exclaimed, "Good God, Hay is gone!" and rushed forward to the bed where he lay. Hay turned his eyes upon them, and his look spoke more than a thousand tongues. He made an attempt to address them; but his lips refused their office, while the big tears chased each other down his pallid and sunken cheek, until the pillow below his head was soaked. Amid the ruins of his body his soul still evidently retained its throne, and when every other avenue of communication with this world was shut up, it threw an expression into his weeping eyes, which would have melted a heart of stone. He was evidently loth to leave this

* Scotch medical students.

world; and I fear, from what I had heard of him, he had too much reason to be so. His situation was truly pitiable; and what was more so, it was past relief; his riches could not relieve it, the remembrance of the past could not, the friends who stood by him were ill-fitted to do so; and even though they had, he was out of hearing in the valley of death. Nature rapidly retreated; and on Monday night, by six o'clock, Death was left alone with his prey.

Heddle, much affected, told me all this; and he and Armstrong came to me the night before the funeral to beg of me to attend it. . . .

Heddle, Armstrong, and I set off in a carriage, on the day of the funeral, to Hay's house.

There were no bustling servants, no gaping crowd, no weeping relatives; the stillness of death was in the house; none were there but Taylor and the Swiss; and there was no living creature broke the silence of the dead man's dwelling, but a pretty little dog, of which Hay was very fond, and which, all unconscious of its loss, came amid its gambols to lick my hand and seek some attention.

When the English clergyman came, we entered the *salle à manger*, from which there was a door opened into the room where Hay lay. The light of day was almost excluded from the chamber; a dim and solitary lamp burned upon the chimneypiece, and its sepulchral light was reflected back from the gold border of the white satin mortcloth that covered the coffin, upon which was placed a crown and wreath of artificial flowers of the same colour.

After two or three more of Hay's acquaintances and countrymen had entered, there was one—who had come with a letter of introduction to him two days before, and had found to his astonishment, that he was dead—who asked Taylor if the "tomb" was screwed down. He was told it was. "Because," said he, with a broad Scotch accent, "it is a custom with us, you know, to take a last look of the deceased before the corpse is lifted." I was highly pleased with this specimen of nationality. His request was immediately granted. We entered the room, the mortcloth was removed, which displayed a coarse, unpainted, uncovered coffin. There was a lock upon it, which Taylor opened; the screws were taken out by the servant, and the whole top taken off. The body was only wrapped up in a long winding-sheet; this was tied at the head and feet, so that the face could not be seen until the knot was undone. The countenance was at last exposed; it was mild, like an infant's asleep; and, unless in the case of a

fine-looking woman's, which I saw in the dissecting-room, I never saw features less marred by death. We looked for a few minutes on the shrouded body, and still and placid face of our countryman. If there was no tear shed, there was no word spoken. Absorbed in his own thoughts, each seemed to forget that he had any other there but the dead man before him.

Taylor, at last stepped forward, and tied again the knot that was never to be untied. The master of the ceremonies, dressed in a black cloak, with a cocked hat and mourning sword, now came in to say that all was ready. . . .

In about two hours we reached Père La Chaise. At the gate we came out of the mourning carriages; and, headed by the English clergyman, and like him, uncovered, we wended our way amid the tall and mournful cypresses, the tombs of marble where lie the mighty dead of France, the crosses and Virgins beneath whose protection the devotees repose, and the flowers and groves of laurel, up the mount at whose base Paris lay stretched out in the bright, unclouded sun. At the moment appointed in the service, the body was let down by the sextons, and, far from the place where his forefathers sleep, the earth of a strange land closed over our poor countryman.

29*th March*.—. . . Moore and I set off for Monsieur Jean-Alexandre Buchon, the editor of the *Constitutionnel*, the first journal in point of talent in France.

We found Buchon sitting with a moustached Frenchman in his study. He was attired in a jacket, and a pair of worsted pantaloons that answered for stockings too. (*Mem.*—To have, if possible, a pair of them.) He is a most acute and intellectual-looking fellow, with immense vivacity in his manner, and more of vigour than is usual among the French; such twisting of the body, such shrugging of the shoulders, such turning up of the eyebrows, such constant use of the hands, the staid inhabitants of Britain can form no idea of, far less practise.

The principal subject of conversation was politics. Buchon appeared to me well entitled to that very first-rate estimation universally awarded to him. Many of his views, however, appeared without foundation; and I could observe in him, as in many others, a petty jealousy of the British nation, and a secret desire to detract from Mr. Canning's well-merited fame. . . . .

31*st March*.—. . . . Went the other day to call upon Monsieur Coquérel,* the editor of the *Protestant Review*, a

* Father of M. Athanase Josué Coquérel, who was suspended by the Consistory of Paris in 1864.

very pleasant young man, and intelligent also. He speaks English almost as well as he does French.

We spoke of Presbyterianism, when he told me that the Protestants on the Continent were all with us in that respect—more even than their forms would indicate.

I had just introduced the subject of the Apocrypha, when our conversation was interrupted by a gentlemen coming in, who was introduced to me as a Protestant clergyman near Paris, and to whom I was introduced as one "du Kirk,"—the distinguishing title under which the Church of Scotland is recognised here. . . .

He then asked me some questions about Chalmers, and told me that he was the only minister whose works were celebrated upon the Continent. I mentioned Robert Hall, but he had never heard of him.

Next day I went with the only remaining letter of Bowring's writing, more anxious to find the person to whom this was directed, than in the other cases.

This arose from what Moore told me. Said he, "Have you any more letters?" "Yes," I replied; "I have one to a Monsieur Marc-Antoine Jullien." "The villain," he replied; "I won't go near him; but go you, by all means." At this I was a little astonished, and asked for an explanation, when he told me a part of Jullien's history that makes me most anxious to see this human monster. I have called twice, but always failed; however, I yet hope to find him. He was no other than the secretary of Robespierre during the bloody times of the Revolution, travelled in this capacity about France, with a portable guillotine, and, in the execution of his most honourable and merciful office, is said to have been the means of chopping off the heads of at least twenty thousand individuals. I am determined to see and speak to this vampire.

. . . . I have spent many an hour in Notre Dame at these Conférences,* with no small entertainment; and then repaired to the Chapel of the Virgin, to hear the last mass sung for the night.

But I often withdrew to some dark, retired arch of the vast and magnificent pile, and enjoyed the solemn and sublime feelings which the scene before me was calculated to excite. The few candles that yet burned at some shrines sufficed barely to show long vistas of lofty pillars, amid which you could dimly descry a kneeling devotee, or the dark figure of a cowled

* Disputations of the priests described in an intermediate part of the Journal.

monk moving with slow and silent steps amongst them. The light from the eternal lamp shone faintly upon the golden crucifix and crosses and candlesticks that adorned the altar. The moonbeam was struggling through the lofty and richly-painted windows, to fall on the sad scene of our Saviour's or some martyr's death, represented by a master's hand; while the effect of all this was heightened, even to a feeling of awe, by the music that came softly swelling and rolling amid the mighty arches from the hidden shrine where the mass was sung. Sometimes the whole body of worshippers sang, and then the sound, though softened and blended by distance, was still strong and powerful. In a moment all was still as death, save the sounds that still faintly vibrated amid the lofty arches. Amid the oppressive and solemn silence the voices of the attendant boys rose shrill and clear, and during every pause they made, the choristers of heaven seemed answering to their song in the clear echo that prolonged the notes.

16*th April.*—Quitted Paris for Brussels on Tuesday the 10th. Fevrier was in great distress about my leaving. On Monday afternoon found him waiting at the Hôtel de l'Etoile in great tribulation; the Count, poor body, had also called repeatedly. Went with Fevrier to buy a present; he took a very cheap one, with which I was not pleased. He went off, more sorry to leave me than I ever saw any, not a relation.

Set off next day for the Mont Royal with Heddle, Everett, and Geddes; embraced all the dames and demoiselles in the house, agreeably to French fashion. There was such a lot, I had a difficulty in finding if I had not missed any—a deadly offence. Wandered about for an hour. We all shook hands with real and mutual sorrow—mounted the banquette; turned about as I entered Montmartre to take a last view of them; took off my hat, and waved a signal of friendship; they were engaged in answering when the coach turned to hide me from them, and, as I thought at the time, it might be for ever.

On his return journey from France to Scotland Mr. Guthrie passed several weeks in London. Of this visit we have some interesting details in a letter written to his brother Patrick:—

"*London, 4th May,* 1827.

". . . . In two days I leave this by a Dundee smack. The idea of again incurring the enormous expense of land-travelling

is perfectly out of the question; and as to the dangers, they are ten times greater in the one case than the other.

"Last night I was at the House of Commons, and a glorious and spirit-stirring scene it was.* I could have wished myself down in the arena of strife to take a part, and lend a hand in the glorious fray; or, at least, to have taken or been allowed to take as active a part there as I did in the discussion of the Bible Society, where I had the honour of setting the example to a no small number of men who objected to the Apocrypha, to support with our voices, our hands, and our feet, Irving in the bold stand he made on that occasion for the Bible. You never saw such a row and riot! —— (for whom I did, and do still, entertain no small respect) acted towards Irving in a manner the most unfair and ungentlemanly I ever saw, and, by his unpointed reasoning, betrayed the notorious weakness of his cause. As hissing was not sufficiently audible amid the thunders of applause, we resorted to another and a better expedient, and by cries of '*shame!*' '*not true!*' and '*to the question!*' arrested Mr. —— more than once in the current of his vituperation. I, at one time, hoped to have an opportunity of speaking; having, more than once, been particularly scowled on and remarked by a host of fellows in black coats. I returned their scowl and stare with five per cent. interest, and would have heartily thanked them to point me out. . . . .

"I might stay weeks in London upon invitations; everybody is so kind."

While in the metropolis he was passing one day along a crowded thoroughfare, and there chanced to meet Dr. Alexander Will, an old Brechin friend of boyish days, who had just returned from India. The two got at once into animated conversation; Mr. Guthrie, with his back at the wall, recounting his Parisian experiences, and having many questions to ask about India. But, to the passers-by, the tall form, stentorian tones, hearty laughter, broad Scotch accent, and vehement gestures were a source of wonder; and Dr. Will used to tell how, in a very few

* See Autobiography, page 77.

minutes, they found themselves surrounded by a considerable crowd, and were glad to move on!

On his return to Brechin in May, 1827, the prospect of obtaining a parish seemed as uncertain as ever. For nearly a year thereafter he remained under his mother's roof, and occasionally officiated for neighbouring ministers.

Another sphere, in which afterwards he was destined pre-eminently to shine, was opening to him at this period of his life,—the platform.* Before this time public meetings had been rare events in his native town. But the controversy relative to the circulation of the Apocrypha was now beginning to agitate the public mind, and nowhere did the battle rage more fiercely than in Brechin, dividing households, Provost Guthrie's among the rest. Many meetings were held to discuss the subject; and, ere long, Mr. Guthrie's gifts as a ready, telling speaker, made him the chief spokesman among the advocates of pure Bible circulation.

On the platform, he seems to have sooner felt his power than in the pulpit. Witness his keen desire to have had his tongue unloosed in London, and the remark he made to a friend, when resigning into his hands the treasurership of the Brechin Branch of the London Missionary Society: "You will be the treasurer, Mr. Don, and I'll take the speaking after this."

* As appears by the *Montrose Review*, of 28th October, 1825, the first speech he ever made in public was delivered in the Cathedral Church of Brechin, at a meeting of the Brechin Branch of the "Society for Missions, Schools, and Tracts."

In March, 1828, a sudden death in his family called him to a totally unlooked-for occupation: he had to assume for a time his brother's place in the Bank. There was then but one bank in Brechin, where now there are seven. Consequently the branch of the "Dundee Union Banking Company," which his father and brother had managed, did a very considerable business. Mr. Don, the then managing clerk of the Guthries' Bank, and now agent for the City of Glasgow Bank in Brechin, has kindly furnished us with some reminiscences of this episode in Mr. Guthrie's career—when, a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, he discounted bills or refused "accommodation" to the farmers and shopkeepers of the district.

A man whose previous training had been with a view to the ministry would scarcely be regarded with favour by bank directors, should he seek to enter their service; and it is a striking proof of Mr. Guthrie's capacity, vigorous common sense, and power of determined application, that he was able, on an emergency, to play the banker not only respectably, but with credit. Mr. Don informs us that, to his astonishment, in a month or two Mr. Guthrie had made himself familiar with all the details of his new occupation; and at the end of the two years during which he was virtually agent of the Brechin Branch Bank, the manager in the head-office at Dundee said, "If you only preach, sir, as well as you have banked, you will be sure to succeed."

The arrangements of the day in the Brechin Bank

five-and-forty years ago were curious by contrast with our times. Instead of closing early in the afternoon, business was briskest throughout the evening; but, by way of compensation, the bank door was regularly locked twice a day, an hour each time, to enable the agent and his clerks to enjoy dinner and tea in peace!

Mr. Don well remembers that, in front of the desk at which the clerico-banker sat, were invariably to be found an open volume, and a capacious snuff-box whose contents rapidly diminished; for he had early begun the practice of snuff-taking—his mother was, all her life, a snuffer—a practice which, in after years, he advised none to acquire, but which he continued to the last to enjoy.*

Besides the book, however, which lay near the ledger and which he perused with avidity during the lulls of bank business, Mr. Guthrie was carrying on study of another kind. From behind that counter he was, during these two years, studying human nature in its many

* An English correspondent sends us the following:—"Something like thirty years ago I formed one of a party on a fishing expedition to Innerleithen. We travelled by stage-coach, and occupied the front seat. Very soon after starting, we all took to smoking, and, as a matter of course, the passenger at the back got the full benefit of our 'clouds.' This was not a very enviable position for our fellow-traveller; and so one of us asked him if our smoking was disagreeable, receiving the following characteristic reply: 'I cannot say it is altogether agreeable, but, nevertheless, I won't ask you to stop; for, let me tell ye, that though I don't smoke, I am very fond of a pinch of snuff, and as I would not give up snuffing for any of you, I cannot well ask you on my account to give up your smoking!' The gentleman my friend had addressed turned out to be no less a personage than Mr. Guthrie (he was not a D.D. then) who was on his way to do sacramental duty in some parish near to Peebles. 'Doing unto others as you would be done by,' was, I believe, uppermost in his breast till the end of his useful life."

aspects, the knowledge of which proved of use to him in dealing with men and women in another sphere. Through life, this faculty of a keen observation was a marked feature of his character, and ceaselessly at work. He combined with it an equally constant habit of putting questions to all sorts of people, on all sorts of subjects, by means of which he was ever adding to his stores of information.

Twelve years thereafter he wrote to his youngest brother, asking his aid to collect some money in Brechin for the building of a school in his destitute Edinburgh parish, and thus humorously referred to these old banking days:—"Give my compliments to all my old acquaintances who used to do business with me in the Bank, bearing that, as I often gave them out money on their order, I hope they'll give me a little on my petition!"

His occupation at this period, though in itself a secular one, did not secularise him. He gladly availed himself of opportunities to preach, and thus—having locked up the world's money on the Saturday night,—of offering next day the unsearchable riches of Christ; nor that only from the pulpit—for on several occasions it is remembered that he addressed large audiences in the open air, in the neighbourhood of Brechin.

CHAPTER III.

ARBIRLOT LIFE.

ARBIRLOT, the scene of Mr. Guthrie's early ministry, is a rural parish in Forfarshire, close to Arbroath, on the eastern sea-board of Scotland, and lies nearly sixty miles north of Edinburgh. "Arbirlot" is a contracted form of *Aber-Elliot, i.e.*, "at the mouth of the Elliot"—a rocky streamlet which traverses the parish; just as in "Arbroath," we have the contracted form of the ancient name, *Aber-Brothock*—the Brothock there entering the German Ocean, beside an abbey magnificent even in ruins.

The only distinctive features in the landscape of Mr. Guthrie's country parish are to be found along the gentle valley of the Elliot. The stream runs near the village, underneath a steep and wooded bank, on whose edge stands the grey tower of Kelly Castle, within which Mr. Guthrie preached for many months, while the church was being enlarged. His first manse stood in the village. It was replaced by another (almost, if not altogether the best manse in Scotland) on the height across the stream —a spot which Mr. Guthrie selected as commanding a

view of the sea. The village itself lies in a secluded hollow beside the stream, where, with the cottages nestling in their greenery, the bridge, the mill, and foaming water, the scene is more than ordinarily picturesque. It has almost an English air—an impression strengthened by observing a luxuriant vine on one of the cottage fronts, which, as the villagers used to tell, produced, in the hot summer of 1826, a crop of ripened grapes.

It is somewhat remarkable, and proves how the surname of Guthrie, unusual in Scotland as a whole, is frequent in Forfarshire, that three of Mr. Guthrie's predecessors in his rural parish were Guthries: viz., John, translated to Perth in 1610, and appointed Bishop of Moray in 1623; James (not the martyr), minister of Arbirlot in 1625; and a second John, about 1660. The only predecessor of Mr. Guthrie in Arbirlot, however, whose memory survives in history, was George Gladstanes, afterwards Archbishop of St. Andrew's. His name is associated with that of Archbishop Spottiswoode, in the often renewed attempts of James I. and Charles I. to undermine the Presbyterian system, and introduce Episcopacy into Scotland.*

When ordained on 13th May, 1830, Mr. Guthrie was

* Gladstanes was succeeded at Arbirlot by David Black, one of the most eminent and godly ministers of his time, who died of an apoplectic stroke when in the act of administering the communion to his congregation there. His friend and former colleague, the illustrious Andrew Melville, in a Latin poem on his death, names and describes Arbirlot (Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum, tom. ii. p. 81.)

in his twenty-seventh year. Some years previously he had been betrothed to Anne, the eldest daughter of the Rev. James Burns, of Brechin,* their engagement having taken place when he was twenty-three and she just sixteen years old. They were married by the bride's father on 6th October, 1830, five months after his ordination to his new charge. Many long and pleasant journeyings did they share in after years, visiting together most parts of Britain and many portions of the Continent; but their marriage trip was limited to the fifteen miles which separated the manse of Brechin from the manse of Arbirlot—the journey being made in a postchaise, which contained not only the bride and bridegroom, but (a strange custom we should now think it) a sister and niece of Mr. Guthrie's.

In addition to the happiness he found at his own fireside (increased as time went on by the prattle of children's voices), Mr. Guthrie had, while at Arbirlot, his

* If Mr. Guthrie's was not a "Levitical" family, Mrs. Guthrie's certainly is. Her father was the eldest of four brothers, all of whom simultaneously held parochial charges in the Established Church of Scotland, viz., James Burns, minister of the parish of Brechin; William H. Burns., D.D., Kilsyth (father of the late William C. Burns, Missionary to China, and of the late Professor Islay Burns, D.D., of the Free Church College, Glasgow); Robert Burns, D.D., formerly of St. George's Parish, Paisley, and afterwards minister of Knox's Church and Professor in Knox's College, Toronto (whose son is Robert F. Burns, D.D., Montreal); and George Burns, D.D., formerly of St. John's, New Brunswick, and latterly of Tweedsmuir and Corstorphine, now the sole survivor. The surviving members of the Rev. James Burns' family are, besides Mrs. Guthrie, the Rev. J. C. Burns of Kirkliston, two daughters, and a son resident in Brechin. By her mother's side, Mrs. Guthrie is cousin-german to Professor David Brown, D.D., Aberdeen; Charles J. Brown, D.D., Edinburgh; and Professor William Chalmers, D.D., London.

widowed mother as a near neighbour; for she, with her daughters, spent five months every season there, to be near her son and to cheer him in his Master's service.

His life in his country parish was in many ways an enviable one. His calling the highest and holiest; his parishioners manageable in point of numbers, and all with scarce an exception members of his flock, he soon got to know every man, woman, and child among them. The ideal of a loving father in the midst of his family, of a trusted shepherd among his sheep, was in a rare degree realised. Several of his parishioners might be richer men; but as neither landowner nor professional man was resident, the minister was frankly conceded the highest status in the district, while yet the humblest cottar felt that in him he could claim a friend. No doubt the picture had its other side. Faithful in rebuking sin, he did not underlie the woe pronounced on those of whom "all men shall speak well." But, take it all in all, the life of a Scottish minister at that period in a rural parish like Arbirlot contained the elements of as pure happiness as may reasonably be expected in this world. "There," to quote his own words, "I learned to love the country, and form a high estimate of the kindness and sobriety, of the virtue and piety, of a well-ordered rural population. The lines had fallen to me in pleasant places. The moral aspects were much in harmony with the physical, of a scene where the fields yielded abundant harvest, and the air, loaded with the fragrant perfume of flowers, rang to the song of larks and woodland birds, and long lines of

breakers gleamed and boomed upon the shore, and ships with white sails flecked the blue ocean, and the Bell Rock tower stood up on its rim, to shoot cheerful beams athwart the gloom of night—a type of that Church which, our guide to the desired haven, is founded on a rock, fearless of the rage of storms."*

He succeeded a very old man, who, dying at the age of eighty-seven, persisted in preaching till within a fortnight of his death. Though Mr. Watson was popular in his day, and always evangelical, one does not wonder that, in his closing years, there was lethargy in the pews. The very first sermon of the new minister sounded like a trumpet-call: the repose of the sleepers was effectually broken.

Mr. Guthrie determined that his every hearer should understand him; carrying out in a higher sphere Lord Cockburn's rule while at the bar (an anecdote Mr. Guthrie delighted to tell as an illustration of the witty judge's sagacity)—"When I was addressing a jury, I invariably picked out the stupidest-looking fellow of the lot, and addressed myself specially to him—for this good reason: I knew that if I convinced *him*, I would be sure to carry all the rest!".

Though from the first his preaching was remarkable, it is apparent from the manuscripts of his sermons at Arbirlot that there was a steady development of that peculiar style which he made at length so entirely his own. What is told in his Autobiography regarding the pains he took in preparing his sermons, and his adop-

* "Studies of Character" (first series), p. 278.

tion increasingly of a pictorial style, is borne out by the statements of those who heard him preach between 1830 and 1837.

His brother-in-law, the Rev. J. C. Burns, writes of the earlier part of his ministry as follows:—

"When Mr. Guthrie was settled as minister of Arbirlot he became much more of a Bible-student than he had been before, and his discourses, which he prepared with great care (using almost exclusively as his help 'Cruden's Concordance' and Dr. Chalmers' 'Scripture References'), became correspondingly instructive and interesting. Though he had possessed himself, immediately on seeing his name gazetted as presentee, of 'Poli Synopsis Criticorum,' and the Commentaries of Thomas Scott and Matthew Henry (I got a commission next morning in Edinburgh to go and purchase them), he made comparatively little use of any of them. He preferred Cruden and *himself* to them all—*i.e.* his own first and fresh impressions of the meaning of the passage he was expounding; and these he set himself to convey in the plainest and most familiar language, and in the most vivid and telling form; so that, while his exegesis might sometimes be at fault, and was always defective, he never failed both to get and keep the attention of his hearers, and to put them in possession of what he wished them to know.

"In this way he expounded (I think on each alternate Sabbath) the Gospel of Mark, and I have a distinct recollection of admiring the *vivaciousness* which he imparted to the sacred narrative, and the novelty which old familiar themes seemed to acquire from the way in which he handled them. I remember well, too, how eagerly attentive a congregation he had to preach to; every eye and ear seemed open, wideawake; there was attention even where there was not approval.

"But during the earlier part of his ministry at Arbirlot—when alone, I had the opportunity of hearing him—he did not discover much of that pictorial power in which he afterwards excelled; still less of that artistic finish with which (without seeming to be artistic, or, at any rate, without seeming to be artificial) he was wont afterwards to use that power. Homeliness, if not uncouthness at times, was characteristic of his style, rather than classic elegance or beauty. There, however, amid its quiet scenes of rural loveliness, he learned the art of

illustration; and I suppose it was in part his experience in his Sabbath-afternoon Bible-class which led him to study it, and which served also to develop his own rare and unrivalled capacity for its use."

The congregation at Arbirlot contained no persons of higher social standing than well-to-do farmers and their families. In the Autobiography there is allusion to one farmer of exceptional cultivation; but Mr. Guthrie had not the additional stimulus which a country minister might feel, whose audience comprises the family and guests from the neighbouring manor-house. Had he not been careful always to give his people the best he had to give, he might have sometimes fallen into the plight which a worthy connection of his own had occasion to regret when, on a certain wet and stormy Sunday at Dun, he resolved (concluding that his auditory would be of the scantiest) to reserve his carefully-prepared discourse for a more favourable occasion, and make a "few simple remarks;" but what was his horror as he entered the pulpit minus his MS., to see the famous Dugald Stewart, then visiting the Erskine family at Dun House, seated in the family pew!*

More than a generation has passed away since Mr. Guthrie began his ministry at Arbirlot. But it were easy, after an interval of even forty years, to present testimony to his faithfulness and assiduity. One of his co-presbyters was Mr. McCosh, then of Arbroath, afterwards Professor in Queen's College, Belfast, and

* "Pastor of Kilsyth," by Islay Burns, D.D., p. 100.

now President of Princeton College, United States. Dr. McCosh's relations with Mr. Guthrie, always most intimate, were strengthened by his marrying a daughter of Dr. Alexander Guthrie, of Brechin. He has kindly furnished us with some reminiscences of Mr. Guthrie's later Arbirlot life, of which we gratefully avail ourselves :—

"His preaching," writes Dr. McCosh, "had already (1835) the characteristics which afterwards made him so marked a man, and made him what I was accustomed to call him, 'the pictorial preacher of the age.' On the Sabbath afternoons he held an exercise for the young, and there he began to let out, at first timidly, his peculiar gifts. . . . . The dull eye of the cow-boy and of the servant-girl, who had been toiling all the week among the horses and cows, immediately brightened up as he spoke in this way, and they were sure to go back next Sabbath and take others with them. It should be added that his unsurpassed power of illustration was always employed to set forth the grand old cardinal truths of the Gospel.

"His preparation for the pulpit was conscientiously careful. Possessed of a ready power of speech, he could have extemporised a sermon at any time, and thus saved himself much labour. But during all the seven years he was in Arbirlot, I believe he never entered the pulpit without having his discourse written and committed. Had he acted in any other way, he might have been left in Arbirlot all his life, greatly esteemed, no doubt, in the district, but without ever occupying the wide sphere which God opened to him. Even in writing, he kept an audience before his mind's eye, and he prepared not an abstract essay, but an address to be spoken to men and women, to young men and maidens. I often found him on the Saturday night amending and correcting what he had written, and filling his mind with the subject. His illustrative style made his discourse more easily remembered by himself, as it was more easily remembered by his audience.

"He was already the most popular minister by far in the district, though as yet scarcely known beyond it. In all the surrounding country parishes, when he preached at the week-day services in connection with the dispensation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the whole people rushed to hear him; and, in Arbroath, where he often preached on the

Sabbath evenings after officiating at home during the day, the churches were crowded to excess. Some hard men thought that his discourses were not very logical; some finical men and women regarded his Forfarshire pronunciation as very broad and his illustrations rather vivid; but they all went to hear him, because they got their hearts warmed.

"And here I am tempted to remark that those critics have committed a great mistake who represent him as having had no other quality than that of being able to move the feelings. Deeper down than even his power of exciting emotion by his pictures, was a foundation of sound common sense with a profound knowledge of human nature, and his pathos was an efflorescence from this root. Some years after this, Sir William Hamilton one day said to me quietly, 'Your friend Dr. Guthrie is the best preacher I ever heard.' I answered I did not wonder at the opinion, but I was surprised to hear it expressed by so great a logician of one not specially possessed of large logical power. He replied with great emphasis, '*Sir, he has the best of all logic; there is but one step between his premise and conclusion.*' I am not sure that the great Edinburgh metaphysician ever uttered a profounder saying than this.

"Mr. Guthrie's genius always seemed to me to resemble in some measure that of Robert Burns. In both, there was the same basis of masculine sense and knowledge of human character. Young Walter Scott marked in Burns' conversation a singular mixture of pathos and humour. There was the same union in Guthrie's conversation and speeches. The question has often been put, How are those two dissimilar qualities so often combined? I believe the answer is this;—both qualities imply a sympathy with human nature.

"What was said of Burke might have been said of Thomas Guthrie—that a man could not have passed five minutes with him in a shed to which they had been driven by the rain without asking who this man is. This arose from his sympathy with man as man. It was by observation and by conversation with the persons he met that he acquired the greater part of his extensive knowledge. No doubt he was a reader with very marked tastes. He liked picture-books and Shakspeare, and history and travels, and biography and medical works;—he certainly did not like metaphysical disquisitions. But he was on the alert to get information from the people he met with, and he must have been a very stupid or a very stiff man from whom he could not extract something. He left on every man the impression, that, of all things, he was most interested in that man's favourite pursuit, and he encouraged him to speak of his

craft, whether he was a farmer, a shepherd, a sailor, a soldier, or a tradesman.

"I have a vivid recollection of his taking me up on one occasion to a place some half-dozen miles off, to the funeral of a co-presbyter. We travelled in a cart, which he liked to do; it reminded him of his boyish days, when he and other children went out to the country. We talked of the departed minister, who was a staunch Moderate; but Mr. Guthrie maintained that he was a sincerely pious man, though brought up in a bad school. The cart was driven by his servant-boy, Sandy Hovells, a *halflin'*—that is, half between man and boy. He talked with Sandy about the things Sandy knew—the farms, and the crops, and the farmers, and the servants; ever and anon giving, without seeming to do so, a good moral or religious reflection. By the time we reached Carmylie I believe he had drawn out of Sandy everything he knew.

"He soon became a popular idol; and the country people had all sorts of stories about him, illustrating his kindness of heart. He had a favourite dog, 'Bob,' black, rough, and ungainly, much attached to his master, but no way amiable to other men and dogs. This animal at times insisted in going into church while his master was preaching, and the minister, in the midst of his sermon, would open the pulpit door and let him in, evidently to keep him quiet.*

"He kept his own congregational library, and had it opened every Saturday evening in the manse to give out books. One night I was present, and greatly interested in the scene. He had a pleasant word to everybody. The parish patriarchs came in, not only to return their book, but to have a talk with him. He asked especially for the man's wife, always giving her a name, 'How is Betty?' and got the whole details of the man's family and farm. The shy boy and the blushing maiden approached him with considerable awe, but felt assured when he named them and asked about their parents, and they went away with the ineradicable conviction that their minister loved them. He had too shrewd a knowledge of human nature to think of examining them on the books they took out; but he encouraged them to talk of the contents of the volume, and he

* Another informant remembers seeing this actually occur. "Bob" lay quietly at his master's feet till the close of the service; when, the blessing having been pronounced, the people were vastly amused to see his fore-paws laid on the book-board, the great black head appearing above it, as he gravely surveyed the departing congregation.

noticed what books and parts of books they liked best, and turned the whole to their good and his own good, as helping him to learn how to preach.* . . . .

"His generosity was not of the sentimental but of the genuine character; he had not only a heart, but his heart was in the right place. At his house the afflicted were welcomed and the poor relieved, and every parishioner went away happy, and with a prepossession in behalf of religion which had been so recommended, and likely to come to the church to hear him preach next Sabbath.

"Arbirlot lay two or three miles from Arbroath, into which he came very frequently. My home became his house of call when he or Mrs. Guthrie came into town. And here let me remark that he had, in his wife, one in every way a 'help-meet' for him. She attended most carefully and judiciously to every domestic duty, and he had thus no household care lying upon him. She was ever kind to his people, and greatly increased his usefulness in his parish. Full of equanimity, when he was excited she was calm, and while she appreciated his genius and evidently enjoyed his jokes, she never attempted to copy or rival him in his personal peculiarities.

"Whenever I had an idle half-day I walked out to his place, where he always received me with a roar of welcome. In the summer season we went out and rolled on the grass. The cattle in the field would gather round and sniff at us; then he would spring up and delight to see them startled and scampering off. 'What a lovely eye! so soft and expressive,' he would say, 'the ox has. People think the simile vulgar, but old Homer must have had a fine sense of beauty when he described a goddess as "the ox-eyed."' As the lark flew up singing;—'That bird rebukes you and me' (we had been talking on some anxious subject); 'it has no cares, and it sings. The farmers are apt to look on the birds as pests; but the birds keep down the grubs, and the grubs may limit certain plants, and these plants have their use, though they may require to be restrained: and so, if you were to destroy that bird, you would throw the economy of nature into confusion.' (That saying of his was brought

* Dr. Guthrie used to tell that frequent inquiries were made for "Adam's Private Thoughts," a devotional book written by an English clergyman of that name in the last century. One Saturday evening Mr. Guthrie thought he would find out from a decent man what made him so anxious to have that particular volume. "Ou, sir," said he, "I just wondered how they could mak' oot what the first man's private thoughts would be aboot!"

vividly to my mind when I found them bringing sparrows from Britain to keep down the insects in New York and Philadelphia.) Or we would go down a mile to the shore of the German Ocean, and watch for hours the sea anemones in the rocky pools; and as he described to me their habits, which he had carefully noted, he would drop a little stone into their cavity, and make me mark how they rejected it, while they clasped and digested their appropriate food. He was sure there was a good and intelligent Being guiding that creature, he could not tell how. And then he would tell me a funny story of some Brechin character. 'One of the vainest men I ever knew was Willy ——. On one occasion he paid a visit to Edinburgh, dressed in high boots with yellow tops. He came back in the same steamboat with the hangman, who was about to execute a woman in Montrose. Several hundred people had gathered on the quay at Arbroath to give the hangman a warm reception. The hangman, seeing them, got on shore early, and addressing one of the leaders of the mob, pointed to Willy as the hangman, and then walked quietly on. Willy had his vanity considerably wounded when he found men, women, and boys bespattering him with mud, tearing his clothes, and threatening to tear his body in pieces!' Then we talked seriously about the wisest way of helping on the cause of the reformation of the Church of Scotland."

Mr. Dick, now resident in Edinburgh, a parishioner of Mr. Guthrie's during his whole Arbirlot ministry, thus writes:—

"Mr. Guthrie's future popularity as a preacher was indicated at the very outset. I recollect the first text he preached from at Arbirlot—1 Thess. v. 23: 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.' I was too young to recollect much of the sermon, but I remember this—the name of Christ seemed, as it were, ringing in my ears. It was the golden thread that bound all the sermon together.

"The text of his first 'Action Sermon,' before dispensing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, was Matt. x. 32, 33; and in connection with this, I feel called upon to give my humble testimony to the faithfulness which was manifested by my pastor in admitting me, a few years afterwards, to the Table of the Lord. I remember how, after repeated examination of all the young communicants together, we were taken

aside, one by one, at the last interview, and very seriously and faithfully addressed upon the important step about to be taken, before giving us our 'tokens' of admission to that sealing ordinance."

The Records of the Kirk-Session, too, indicate not only Mr. Guthrie's unceasing diligence in working the parish, but also how thoroughly he carried out the Presbyterian ideal,—making his elders fellow-labourers with himself in household visitations, prayer-meetings, and general superintendence of the flock. Most of these elders were older men than himself, and, of the eleven, one alone survives. To this venerable man let us now introduce the reader.

David Key's cottage was a favourite resort of Mr. Guthrie; and often did the elder's noisy loom come to a standstill as the minister was seen lifting the door-latch to have a friendly chat, the invariable preliminary to which was a leisurely exchange of snuff-boxes. After his settlement in Edinburgh, Mr. Guthrie continued to correspond with this humble friend; and we are tempted to give an extract here from one of David's letters to his old pastor, not only because it indicates the hold Mr. Guthrie had of his people's affections, but because the writer (a hand-loom weaver till age disabled him) is himself a sample of the kind of men who compose the best of the Scottish peasantry. Our English readers would be astonished did they know how keenly interested these people have always been in ecclesiastical questions, how much they think and speak about them. The common people understood the principles

at stake in the conflict that terminated in 1843. The Disruption was essentially a popular movement; had it been merely fostered and urged on by ecclesiastics for their own ends (as has been sometimes alleged) the Free Church of Scotland never could have assumed its present proportions, or become the power in the land it is:—

"*Arbirlot, January 15th*, 1840.

"I have just sat down, after a long interval, to write a few lines to my never-to-be-forgotten friend and pastor. . . . Ah! dear sir, you little know the rememrance of our 'Dear Thomas,' as you are famillarly called among your warm-hearted friends in Arbirlot; and this brings a striking remark across my mind, which I cannot forget. It happened on a Sabbath in the fall of the year. I had been at a funeral that day, and I was sitting on a gravestone in the churchyard, waiting for the time of going into church; and our friend David Gibson * came and conversed with me about the Sabbath-schools going again; and he was as usual making remarks about the conducting of the schools, and refferring to former practice, and how we did when you was advocating the cause of education. He very earnestly exclaimed, 'Ah, David, Maister Guthrie was taken away from us by Providence, to Let us see ourselves, for we did not see his Great Master above him;' meaning, our attachment to the creature too much made us Lose sight of our duty.

"But I was forgetting to inquire at you, what you are thinking about the state of matters in our Church, anent the Strathbogie ministers, and the Court of Session and Commission of the General Assembly. The people of Montrose have done their duty against the country lairds and the Moderats on Wednesday last.

"You should get the people of Edinburgh to petition the Legislature for the abolition of patronage altogether, and see if the other Large towns would follow, and parishes throughout Scotland. I have spoken twice about a meeting, but Mr. Kirk says there is plenty of time yet before Parliament meet for general Busness, as the Royal Marrage will be over before anything of publick business be brought forward; but I think the sooner people petitions the better, as they will see the people are alive to their spiritual priviledges. . . . .

* See Autobiography, page 139.

"Dear sir, I hope you will write me soon what you think will be the issue of the struggles."

The writer of this letter is still alive in Arbirlot, at the advanced age of 86. He was visited the other day by his minister, the Rev. Richmond S. Thomson, of the Free Church, Arbirlot, along with a friend, who kindly took down the following dialogue, the language of which, besides being pure Angusshire Doric, is so racy and quaint that we have thought it best, while abridging it to some extent, to retain it in its original form:—

Mr. Thomson. How old are you, David?

David Key. Eighty-six, sir, and my wife there, she's eighty-three.

Q. Do you remember anything about Mr. Guthrie's first sermon in Arbirlot?

A. Aye, weel, Minister. There was a terrible mote* o' folk the first Sabbath, anxious to see if he would be like Maister Watson that was afore him. Maister Watson preached withoot a paper till he was eighty, and then he read seven year', till he was eighty-seven, and then he deed, ye see. But, as I was tellin' ye, he used the paper for seven year', and was gettin' unco† dry; so we was watchin' if oor new minister wad be ony brisker-like. Maister Guthrie, he gi'es oot the text frae the Reader's Bible,‡ and syne he shut-to the book. At that, auld William Airth (William was the smith, ye ken) stood up in his seat the way sometimes we was allowed in thae days, if ye'd been sittin' ower lang. He was reckoned a terrible critic upon men. Up he started till his feet, and I tell ye, he stood like a brod§ the whole time, and forgot to sit doon! So, when the kirk cam' oot, a'body was gatherin' at the end o' the brig, and the foremost cries to auld William Airth, the smith, "Weel,

* Number. † Very.

‡ The Sabbath duties of the "Reader" (who was usually the schoolmaster), originally more extensive, became gradually narrowed to reading the Scriptures during the assembling of the people. This practice was at one time common in Scotland, but is now abandoned. The Reader's desk was commonly called the "lateran" (lectern).

§ As stiff as a board.

William, what do *you* think the day, you that's heard sae mony preachers—what do ye think o' him?" Says William, pressin' past them, and speakin' to himsel' like, "THAT'S the preacher, lads, THAT'S the preacher!" I mind o'd weel: he just did wonderfu' at the very first.

Q. As you were an elder after that, you would get to know the minister well?

A. Ye see, when Maister Guthrie cam', there was just three elders in the parish; and I was ane o' aught * that was added on, and that made eleven; and, as I have heard, we was the first elective † session in Forfarshire. Mr. Guthrie was seven year' and a half here, and he tried 'most a'thing, and he made a great stir in his new ways. He keepit prayer-meetings ance a week in the elders' hooses. The man o' the hoose read a chapter and gave a prayer, and syne the minister himsel' read and explained. And, forbye, he sent heaps o' tracts aboot amang the folk, and was constantly at something or ither in the improvin' way.

Q. And how were these movements liked?

A. They caused a heap o' speakin'. One day, John ——— says to me (him and me was great freends, tho' he didna belong to oor parish), "I met your new minister gaein' to Arbroath. He's a strange man that, ye've gotten; he's surely no' a practical man, that; they tell me he just gathers up his preachin' by the road." So I says to him, says I, "Is na' he practical? Come ye across to me i' the evenin', and see him wi' an axe whackin' awa' at his trees, and see if he's no practical!" Ye see, he had begun to tak' in the braes at that time; the axe fitted him fine i' thae days, and he soon had forty acres under crap. It was wonderfu' how he tried a' thing.

Q. Then did he not start a savings bank?

A. Aye did he. Ye see, he kent about bankin'; but I never had muckle ado wi' him in that direction. And he begun the parochial library, and had an annual sermon and a collection to buy new books, and get the auld mendit.

Q. Then wasn't he strong against drinking in those days?

A. He was that. There used to be twa "publics" at the Elliot, and he got them putten doon; and there is never a public-hoose in the village since syne. And when the drunk man gaed ower the heugh,‡ and was found down in the burn

* One of eight.

† That is, the elders ordained on this occasion were elected by the male communicants, the minister and existing elders having the right of veto.

‡ A cliff.

drooned, he gied the drinkers a terrible redd-up; * in fac', he never seemed to forget it after, but was aye turnin' the deed body up.†

Q. What about Sabbath schools?

A. Lang syne they had Sabbath schools, in Maister Watson's time, but they were droppit. So, when Maister Guthrie cam', he was for the Sabbath schools gotten up again, and called on me, as ane o' the auld teachers; and we started afresh, and had three schools in different parts of the parish.

Q. Then, did many more people begin to come to the church after the new minister settled here?

* Exhortation or rebuke.

† On the Sabbath thereafter, Mr. Guthrie preached from the text "Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, ye drinkers of wine," Joel i. 5. At the end of his MS. he has written "Arbirlot. December, 1833. Man killed in parish in state of intoxication—fell over rocks at Kelly." From this sermon we make the following extract:—"A Roman is represented when he wished to excite the public indignation against the assassins of his friend, as having conveyed the pale, bloody and bleeding body to the public streets, and (lifting up the mantle that was thrown over it and pointing to the wounds that covered it) as having then and there called for vengeance on the heads of the pitiless assassins. And if anything could have made the drunkard hate his crime or the sober shun it, it might be the dead body that in this church preached better against the crime of drunkenness than a hundred sermons. If there be such a sinner here to-day, I would rather have had him here some days ago. I can now only *tell* him what drunkenness will do, but I would then have *shown* him. He has often had the warning of the living; he would then have had the warning of the dead. Though warned in vain against drunkenness at a Communion Table; though the vow taken over the body of Christ has been given to the winds of heaven, yet, perhaps, by divine grace, this horrid spectacle might have sobered him for ever; and though the entreaties of his parents, of his wife, of his children, of his friends, and of his minister have failed, he might have heard with effect the dead body saying to him, 'Awake, ye drunkard, and weep and howl.' The body is now consigned to the grave, the soul to the judgment of Him who made it; but I cannot let such an event pass without endeavouring to improve it by setting before you some views of this crime which may, by the Divine blessing, shake off the fatal slumber." . . . .

Mr. Guthrie prevailed upon the Factor to make it a condition of obtaining a lease in Arbirlot that no house should be used for the sale of drink. Nor did he neglect the living sufferers; for when, a few days after the terrible occurrence, the widow of the poor wretch came to the village in search of her husband, Mr. Guthrie took a great interest in her case, and raised above £20 for her relief.

A. Aye, a terrible difference. She was thin planted in the auld time; but after Maister Guthrie cam', the kirk was filled haigh up and laigh doon.* The folk would come miles and miles to hear him. Lots o' Arbroath folk cam' regular, ye see; and frae Boysack Muir.

Q. How far is Boysack Muir?

A. It's four mile' frae here; but you would have seen the road from Boysack just black wi' folk. And they cam' frae Panbride, that's five mile. There was twa auld women frae Panbride in red cloaks, and as there was no seats for them, they sat ever at the foot-step o' the pulpit stair; and they brought their bit piece—thae wives wi' their red cloaks—and wad hae stayed, if there was afternoon or evening service. And by-and-by the kirk was untenable, and the parish appealed to the laird to build a new kirk, and mak' it bigger; and so an extra aisle was added, and the middle loft † put in. He never went awa' on Sundays i' thae days, and at Sacrament-times we had a terrible traffic o' folk, and six tables commonly, and six hours o' services to begin wi', and then an hour o' an interval, and syne in again for the evenin'. Thae was grand times, sir, grand times!

Q. Not six tables surely, David?

A. Aye, six at the very least; for the Hunder-an'-Third Psalm was aye weel dune by the last table; and, ye see, we could only gie them aught lines for ilka ane ‡ o' the services, and she was aye terriblys throw § by the hinder end o' the tables. I mind ane o' thae days there was an auld decent-like man cam' in late, and there was not a single fit o' room for him to sit doon. So Maister Guthrie stops in his preachin', and says loud oot, "I don't like to see an honest old man stand while younger men sit." But that had no effec'; so he goes on louder, "I just as well like to see a poor man sitting as a rich." Syne they made room for the auld man.

Q. Then had you never more than one sermon?

A. Aye, we had a Sabbath class every Sabbath afternoon, and even in the afternoon ye would na hae gotten a seat i' the body o' the kirk, she was that fu'; and he used to make grown-up folk recite questions and hymns, and then he would ha' ta'en up the subject, and lectured for a quarter of an hour just even on; and eh! sirs, he made it sae interestin' and attractive.

Q. Then he had always been fond of illustrating, had he?

* High up and low down. † Gallery.
‡ Each one. § Very nearly finished.

A. Illustratin', sir, what's that?

Q. Oh, using illustrations and figures from the sea, and so on.

A. Pointedly! Lots o' illustrations frae the sea, and the earth, and the air, and onything that cam' handy. Illustrations extraordinar'! He was a ready-wittit man; and then, when he lookit in to see a body, he was just as hame-ower* as a neeghbour. In fact, I would say, he didna ken onything about pride. He was aye real couthy,† ye see. He beat a' thing for that; and sae humoursome and fond o' a joke. He would begin, "That puts me in mind," and so on; and ye boot ‡ to laugh, ye couldna' help it. *They* kent that, the Arbroath folk, at their Voluntary Controversy meetin's they had, when there was an uproar, and they rose in the gallery, he would ha' cried out, half-laughing, "Oh, that just minds me o' sic' and sic' a thing," and the folk a' burst oot a-laughin', so they couldna' riot after that.

Q. He had always plenty to say, had he?

A. Thoosands! He never had to rummage long for a word. A ready-wittit man, I wull say that.

Q. Did he use a set of formal prayers, as many old ministers did in church?

A. Form o' prayers, sir? Eh, na! His prayers was aye altered. Ye see, he had a great flow.

Q. Did he not get a call soon after he came, before the time he left you?

A. Aye, to Greenside, in Edinburgh. The village was in a terrible steer aboot it. He wouldna gang at that time. But I never saw a greater rearin' i' the parish aboot onything than there was when the word got oot about the Greensides wantin' him.

Q. Were the parishioners not very ill-pleased then, David, when he did go away?

A. Ill-pleased, ca' ye it? Ill-pleased! I tell ye they were greetin', they were a' greetin'!

It is a special advantage of the Presbyterian Church, that by her organization each individual minister realises a personal interest in the movements of the whole body. He is no isolated unit, who feels himself helpless to check

* Homely. † Frank. ‡ Behoved.

tendencies at work within the Church of which he honestly disapproves, and who strives to forget the dangers that are rife, in the praiseworthy diligence with which he cultivates his own little corner of the vineyard. The Presbyterian system gives every minister a permanent seat and vote in her Church Courts;* thus the humblest country pastor exerts a certain influence on the Church's action, and, should he possess taste and talents for it, is free to take his share in the deliberations which affect her destiny and well-being in the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly.*

In later life, Mr. Guthrie took comparatively little part in Church Courts; but, during his Arbirlot ministry, he was scarce ever absent from the Presbytery meetings, and looked forward with zest to his monthly visit to Arbroath on these occasions. In the general business of the Presbytery he took, indeed, a leading part; and in 1836 he was elected Presbytery clerk—an appointment which shows the opinion entertained by his brethren of his business capacity. In the less frequent meetings

* It may be well to explain, for the benefit of our non-presbyterian readers, that the governing bodies under the Presbyterian system are KIRK-SESSIONS, PRESBYTERIES, SYNODS, and GENERAL ASSEMBLIES. Each congregation has a KIRK-SESSION, consisting of the minister, who is "Moderator," and of lay "elders," chosen by the communicants. The Presbytery consists of all the ministers and a lay representative from each Kirk-Session, within "the bounds." The Synod consists of certain contiguous Presbyteries united together. The General Assembly is the Supreme Court of the Church, possessed of the highest executive authority, and the source of legislation. It consists of clerical and lay deputies from all the Presbyteries of the Church. The above statement holds true of the various sections of the Presbyterian Church, with slight modifications in particular instances.

of the Synod of Angus and Mearns he took his share; and came up to Edinburgh for the General Assemblies of 1833, 1834, and 1835.

At the time of his settlement in Arbirlot, the question of Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland was beginning to be keenly discussed. Simultaneously with the revival of spiritual life within the Church, and the consequent growth of the Evangelical party, a desire for freedom in the choice of their pastors took possession of the people of Scotland.

The existence of Lay Patronage was the indirect cause of the Secessions from the Scottish Church in the last century, and of the Disruption in the present. In the course of our narrative, it will be seen how the Church's action in connection with Patronage brought her into collision with the Civil Courts; how, in that collision, the great principle of her spiritual independence was infringed and even denied; and how, the Legislature having refused to interfere, the Disruption of 1843 became a necessity. But the first decision of the Civil Courts, by which the Church considered her rights interfered with, was not pronounced until after Mr. Guthrie had left Arbirlot for Edinburgh; we have at this stage, therefore, to deal with the question of Patronage alone.

Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland, which had been abolished after the "Second Reformation" in 1649, was restored by Queen Anne in 1712. From that time onwards it had proved a root of bitterness within the Church's vineyard, and the efforts of the Evangelical party, under

the leadership of Dr. John Erskine, Sir Henry Moncrieff, and Dr. Andrew Thomson, had been uniformly directed towards its extirpation. Along with this Anti-Patronage movement, but quite distinguishable from it, was the assertion of "Non-Intrusion,"—the principle, that is to say, "That no person be intruded in any of the offices of the Church contrary to the will of the congregation to which they are appointed." Down to the time of Dr. Andrew Thomson's death in 1831, it may be said generally that the Evangelical party contended equally for both these principles. Thereafter, while the Anti-Patronage agitation continued to be pursued by individual members of the party, the efforts of the Evangelicals as a body were directed chiefly towards obtaining such *modification* of the law of Patronage as, while conserving the right of the patron to nominate candidates for a vacant living, reserved to the congregation the acceptance or rejection of any candidate so nominated. In pursuance of this policy, the Evangelical party in the General Assembly of 1834, constituting for the first time a majority of the house, passed the "Veto Act," the object of which was to give to the "male communicants, heads of families" in any congregation, the right, after hearing him preach, of rejecting the patron's presentee.

To this preference of a temporising policy, as he regarded it, over an out-and-out Anti-Patronage one, it will be observed in the Autobiography* Dr. Guthrie

* Page 225.

attributes the Disruption catastrophe. His belief was that, if the whole Evangelical party had concentrated its force on an agitation for the abolition of Patronage, root and branch, such an agitation would have proved successful, and the collision with the Civil Courts (which, by bringing the question of the spiritual independence of the Church into dispute, produced the Disruption) would have been avoided. Whether he was right or wrong in this belief, it is at all events certain that the views on Patronage which Mr. Guthrie from the very first supported, came ultimately to be regarded as sound by the whole Evangelical party. In 1833, when their cause was "the forlorn hope of a feeble and despised minority," Mr. Guthrie voted for the total abolition of Patronage, as much convinced of the soundness of that position then as years thereafter, when in 1842 it became the watchword of the whole party.*

The Presbytery of Arbroath witnessed many a conflict on this question during the period of Mr. Guthrie's incumbency at Arbirlot. The following letter to his eldest brother gives us a curious glimpse into that reverend Court, and discovers the part which Mr. Guthrie took in mooting this question of Patronage there at a very early stage:—

"*Manse of Arbirlot, 7th December*, 1833.

"DEAR DAVID,—I believe I promised to write you what had occurred at the Presbytery. . . . I learned from Cooper

* It is not a little remarkable to find the Established Church of Scotland adopting at the present hour a policy which amounts to a practical admission that the Anti-Patronage views of the men of forty years ago were just.

that Mr. Gleig had been inquiring at him whether the minister of Arbirlot, or any other 'maker of mischief,' was to disturb the meeting on Wednesday about the question of Patronage. . . . .

"Well, Wednesday came; and with it, in came Dr. Trail, and out came Mr. Gleig, who would, had the vote come on, [have] been overwhelmed by no less than five elders, who came up from Arbirlot, Barrie, Kirkden, Guthrie, and Arbroath, stout and strong for the battle. Mr. Gleig was amazed at their number —the like had never been seen before since Arbroath was a presbytery; and I heard him say with amazement, as one stour and stout-like foeman appeared at the table with his commission after another, 'How many's o' them? It's Patronage that's brought them here!'

"I was anxious, if possible, to disjoin Muir from the Moderate men: so after submitting a draft of the petition to Provost Andson,* I waylaid Mr. M. before going into the Presbytery, and reading it, asked him, 'Will you support that? I intend to move its adoption to-day,'—when he said, 'If you will take out the first sentence' (which contained some declaration of no great importance),' and put it off to next meeting, which I think you ought to do in fairness to our opponents, I will support you,'—terms which both Provost Andson and I readily agreed to. He'll be forth with some uproarious philippic against us at next meeting; but then he'll give us his vote, and we should like to have as large a majority as possible.

"The motion is the same as the Glasgow one and Edinburgh Anti-Patronage one,—to abolish the Act of Queen Anne, and leave it to the Church to lay down a plan for the election of a minister. This is not only the constitutional way of settling the matter, but it will, I see, go to remove the opposition of some; and though the General Assembly may not at once put the system on a sufficiently broad basis, yet as the Assembly improves new and more complete arrangements will be introduced.

"After we had met, I rose and gave notice of my motion. I gave them the proportion of Dissenting meeting-houses in proportion to the churches of the Establishment; I gave the increase of voluntary societies and principles; I gave them the news of burgh councils throwing the election into the hands of the people; I gave them the immense number of petitions sent up to last Parliament for abolition; I endeavoured to frighten

* Chief Magistrate of Arbroath, one of the lay members of the Presbytery.

them with a Radical revolution, and finished by reading my motion. I saw [that]the clause, not calling upon Parliament to say it shall belong to the people to elect, but to leave it to the General Assembly to say who shall be the electors, had had its effect. Our friend Barclay of Lunan * came over and said with a hotch and laugh, 'That's a wise-like motion, man, that a' body can support, and nane o' the Radical touches ye had afore!'" . . .

Of this Arbroath Presbytery and Mr. Guthrie's part in the Anti-Patronage agitation, the President of Princeton thus writes:—

"At the close of the year 1835 I was ordained minister of the Abbey Chapel, Arbroath.

"On surveying the co-presbyters among whom my lot was cast, I found some old men of the Moderate type bent on keeping things as they were, and some young men who afterwards rose to eminence, eager to reform the Church of Scotland, and make her thoroughly evangelical and popular. I soon discovered that the most remarkable man among the brethren, indeed, the most notable man in the district, was Thomas Guthrie, then thirty-two years of age, of a tall form, lank and bony, with very marked features and a lively manner, and, I may add, wearing strong, clumsy boots.† The minister

* Rev. Robert Barclay, a pursy old bachelor and a great oddity; who, notwithstanding his peculiarities, and partly, perhaps, because of them, was much liked by Mr. Guthrie. The minister of Arbirlot had many stories about his friend; among others, that so wholesome a dread had the minister of Lunan of demoniacal agency, that it was his invariable custom, after extinguishing his candle at night, to leap into bed "close-footie," as Barclay termed it, that is, with the feet placed close together,—the only infallible guarantee, in his belief, against the hinder one being seized by some invisible hand!

† The Rev. J. W. Taylor, of Flisk, sends us the following, which, as a curious corroboration of Dr. McCosh's reminiscence, we insert here:—"Dr. John Ritchie, the great Voluntary leader, had charged the ministers of the Established Church with living the lives of Sybarites, faring sumptuously every day, and clothing themselves in soft raiment. At the Arbroath meeting, Mr. Guthrie had to reply to this. He was standing on the front of the platform; his boots were strong, iron-clad, country boots, and his trousers all bespattered with mud—for he had walked in from Arbirlot. Looking round the audience, and holding out his foot, he pointed to it and said, 'My friends, Dr. Ritchie declares that we are a set of dandies; do

of Arbirlot was palpably the master-spirit in the Presbytery, and in the social gatherings of the clergy. He made every one he addressed feel that he sympathised with him. There was commanding good sense in all he said when he was serious; there was such expression of genuine feeling when anything moved him, and irrepressible laughter when he told his humorous stories; and even in his most boisterous moments such a profound reverence for all that is good and sacred.

"Without our being fully aware of it, we were passing through a great era in the history of the Church of Scotland.

"The son of an Established Church father and of a Seceder mother, and of a Covenanting stock, Thomas Guthrie was bent on maintaining the Church of Scotland, but bent at the same time on restoring her to her primitive purity, on abolishing patronage, and securing that the Gospel should be preached purely and fervently. He and the Rev. Robert Lee, at that time a minister in Arbroath,* had gained great reputation in the district for the way in which they had repelled Dr. Ritchie, of Potter Row, when he came to Arbroath to spread Voluntaryism. And now, just because he had defended the Church, he felt he was the more bound to reform it, without which reformation he could not continue to defend it. He felt as if this Voluntary had come upon them as Sanballat came upon the Jews, when they were rebuilding their walls; and he was resolved, while he built with the one hand, to bear his sword in the other. He was favourable to the Veto Law passed in 1834, as affording a partial remedy; but he demanded that patronage should be destroyed root and branch, and the full rights of the people restored. He was sure that was the best course, and most likely to succeed, as drawing towards it all who felt an interest

you call *that* the foot of a dandy?' The appeal was irresistible, and was responded to with great laughter on the part of the audience, and with cheers which were redoubled as Mr. Guthrie stood holding out his foot and looking about him with the quietest and most comical smile."

The sequel of the story is equally good:—"Dr. Ritchie was struck with the effectiveness of the reply. At a subsequent meeting, he had to answer the charge that his party were 'showing the cloven foot.' The Doctor was attired, as was his wont, punctiliously,—knee breeches, silk stockings, and dress shoes. So, extending his shapely limb, he asked with an air of triumph, 'Do you call that a cloven foot?' Whereupon a mechanic in the gallery shouted out in a gruff voice, 'Tak' aff the shoe, sir, and we'll see it.'"

* Afterwards of Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh.

in the old principles and history of the Church of Scotland, and having in its favour that popular political tide which, a few years before, had carried the Reform Bill. He regretted that so many of the Evangelical ministers and elders, alarmed by the few excesses which, as might have been expected, followed the passing of the Reform Bill, threw themselves openly into the Tory side of politics, and thus lost the popular current, without gaining the aristocracy, who were fast abandoning the Presbyterian Church. In pursuing this course, he was constantly proposing measures in the Presbytery fitted to manifest our principles, to warm the people in our behalf, and generally to meet the emergencies of the times; and he took pains to have our proceedings in the local papers. Though not specially, like Cunningham and Candlish, an ecclesiastical lawyer, he was well acquainted with the history and principles of the Church; and the resolutions he tabled at the Presbytery were always distinguished by much practical sagacity, and advocated without bitterness. The very Moderates whose power he was condemning continued to have a warm affection for the man. He put his reforming proposals in such a shape that, while they could not sanction them, they had little heart in denouncing them. We younger men made him our leader; and he led us very pleasantly, always professing to consult us, even when the scheme was already fully formed in his own mind, and willing to give us the credit which belonged to himself. Following this policy, a very important Anti-Patronage meeting was called in my church; the attendance was large, and he made a speech characterised by the qualities which afterwards earned him such reputation in Edinburgh and over Great Britain and Ireland.

"It will be acknowledged that in that eastern coast of Mid-Scotland he was the first to raise that popular wave which carried us on to the Disruption, and through it."

The Records of the Presbytery of Arbroath contain various motions proposed by Mr. Guthrie on the subject of Patronage; here is one, of date 3rd February, 1836, which he carried by a majority:—"Whereas patronage is inconsistent with the constitutional privileges of the Church of Scotland; and whereas the Act of 1712 was passed in direct violation of the principles of the Union;

and whereas the Church has not only never legally recognised patronage, but has, from the earliest periods down to 1784, remonstrated and protested against lay patronage as a grievance: May it therefore please the Venerable the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to petition both Houses of Parliament to abolish the right of lay patronage, and to remit to and authorise the General Assembly to make such rules for the calling of ministers to vacant parishes as to its wisdom may seem meet."

All the speeches which he delivered in the Church Courts at this time were carefully written out beforehand, and many of these MSS. have been preserved. It may be interesting to our readers to make short quotations from two of them, as illustrative both of the kind of arguments employed in the controversy, and of that telling style of which Mr. Guthrie afterwards became so great a master. The speech, from which we give the following extract, was delivered at a meeting of the Synod of Angus and Mearns held in the Old Church of Brechin, about the year 1835:—

"It is said that patronage is 'a good working system.' If that be so, if patronage has wrought favourably for the interests of the Church, then it is a very odd circumstance that her enemies have always resorted to patronage to do her injury. If patronage strengthened her in the days of James VI., it is very strange that Charles II. should have resorted to patronage when he intended to weaken her. If patronage, instead of a burden, was a benefit to her—instead of a breach, was a bulwark to her—in the days of Charles II., it is marvellously strange that Queen Anne's Tory ministers should have resorted to patronage as an instrument to crush the Church. Why, sir,

unless these men were downright drivelling idiots, the fact of their uniformly resorting to patronage when their object was to injure the Church, would satisfy me, though I knew nothing more, that it was not a bulwark to defend us, but a breach to let in the enemy.

"But, Moderator, I require no such inference to make out my case. An inefficient eldership; in many parishes no eldership at all; churches through which you might drive a cart-load of whin, and never prick up one of the few sleepers that snore among empty boxes; our peasantry (who are not given to change, and who have an hereditary attachment to the church where their fathers worshipped, and round which their fathers sleep) compelled—I say *compelled*—in many cases to travel five or six miles to a dissenting meeting-house; the lower class of the people arrayed in many cases against the Church in defence of which the forefathers of these very people suffered, and bled, and died; six, seven, or eight hundred dissenting meeting-houses, a large proportion of which owe their existence solely and entirely to unpopular appointments;—these are some of the fruits of that system which we are told is 'a good working system.'

"They tell us that if you have not patronage you have heats and divisions. And have not you heats and divisions in every state? These are inseparable from liberty: but is despotism for that reason better than freedom? Has patronage been the cause of no heats and divisions? Were there no heats in Gillespie's* congregation when, on his deposition, man, woman, and child, elders and members, all left it, but four individuals to whom his successor was left to preach? Have not many other parishes been in almost the same circumstances? Has patronage produced no divisions? Why, sir, in the two parties of Moderates and Populars,† it has produced division within the Church itself.

"Heats and divisions!—Sir, I have no objection to a little heat! Some places would be better of some more of it; an iceberg of a minister having been floated in amongst them, they have been cooled down to something below zero. Give me the noise of life rather than the silence of death."

On another occasion, alluding in the Presbytery of

* Rev. Thomas Gillespie, Minister of Carnock, was deposed in 1752, for having refused to intrude a minister on an unwilling people.

† Another name for "Evangelicals."

Arbroath to the danger caused to the Church of Scotland by the working of patronage, he said:—

"I am not more sure that I am standing in this place than I am sure the Establishment shall fall, if patronage be not removed.

"The day that sees the Dissenters anything like a majority in the country is the last of the Church of Scotland. When we are the minority, where shall we look for defence? To the will of Parliament, that by an Act established us? Why, it is that very Act that will ruin us; our artillery will then be turned against ourselves; with that very Act will they batter our bulwarks into pieces. It will then afford them the strongest and the most successful position they can occupy. Because, sir, the very statute by which we are made an Established Church, bears that the Church of Scotland is made the Established Church, because, and only because, it is agreeable to the minds of the majority of the people. The day, therefore, sir—and that day is not far distant if you allow patronage to remain—that the people desert us, the Parliament will desert us too, and we virtually (and very soon it would be seen we actually) cease to be the Established Church."

Nor was it only in Church Courts that Mr. Guthrie assisted his party at this time. He addressed many public meetings throughout Forfarshire, and it was when face to face with a popular audience that he was chiefly in his element.

"The first time I heard him speak" (we again quote from Dr. McCosh's MS.) "was at his friend Mr. Kirk's church at Barry. He was addressing a plain, sober, old-fashioned, but intelligent country congregation. It was at the time when the Voluntary Controversy was at the fiercest, and Mr. Guthrie and myself (I am sorry to say) were pleading the necessity of a separation of the combined missionary society of the parish into two. He defended his position on the ground that, when two parties could not agree, it was better for them to separate; and he referred to the cases of Abraham and Lot, of Paul and Barnabas. In the way of pleading the cause of missions, he told story upon story, which brought tears from the eyes of the hard-faced men in the meeting. He then gave a most graphic description of the Voluntary Controversy being started among a company of shearers

(reapers) cutting down the grain in his glebe, of his being afraid of them turning their hooks against each other, and of his ending the discussion by placing the Established Church people at one end of the field and the Voluntaries at the other. As he spoke he had his audience in tears one minute and convulsed with laughter the next. When he had continued some time in this way, an old man, with the tears undried on his cheeks, and holding both his sides, rose and said, 'Please, Maister Guthrie, stop! We can stand this nae langer.' I have never seen such an effect produced by speaking before nor since. I clearly saw from that date what a moving power that man would become."

The same power of organization and tact which afterwards proved so useful to him in his Ragged School and other enterprises in Edinburgh is discernible in his management of the many meetings he convened about this time in his own parish. The *Montrose Review* of the period records a variety of these meetings at Arbirlot; and it is amusing to notice how, while Mr. Guthrie avoids taking the chair on such occasions, and gets the resolutions moved and seconded by others, he is yet the manager and mainspring of the whole.

Of one of these meetings Dr. McCosh says:—"He called an Anti-Patronage meeting in his own church, and I remarked with what adroitness he carried his people with him, and kept two hare-brained farmers who were opposed to him from breaking up the assemblage." In a characteristic letter Mr. Guthrie describes this very meeting:—

"*Manse of Arbirlot, 6th March*, 1836.

". . . . In spite of the coarse day, Wednesday, we had a large meeting in the church at night for instituting a missionary society, &c., and proposing an Anti-Patronage petition. Whitson, Lee, and McCosh were here. P—— was like to give us

some annoyance; of his intentions to do which I knew nothing till about to enter the church. I then learned that he had got brass branches made for his gallery, and provided them with wax candles. He found, it seems, a most worthy and respectable coadjutor in N——, whom I saw on entering stuck up in the front of the gallery; and they had manifestly laid their heads together.

"Well, after Whitson, standing upon the stair, had spoken, and Lee was ascending, P—— got up in the front of the gallery and proposed that Lee should go into the pulpit. I desired Lee to ascend the highest part of the stair, so that all the people in the galleries might see and hear. This Lee did, which was enough, and more than enough. However, P—— still insisted that Lee should enter the pulpit. I bade Lee go on, when P—— got up and cried, 'Well, sirs, they canna do without us; what say ye, N——? Let's go and leave them, sirs.' Up got the two, expecting the people to move along with them; but, to their grievous mortification, not a man, woman, or child stirred from their seats, and the business of the meeting went quietly on.

"Foiled in this attempt, they, however, in a little returned to the church, and when it came to my turn to speak, I explained, in a humorous, soothing way, to P—— why the pulpit was not, and was never, used on such occasions: and I thought, and so did everybody else, that we had got him quieted. However, I suspect, he had acted up to the resolution he had been publishing some days beforehand, that he would take a good glass to prepare himself for speaking; for, when I had read the regulations of the society, and was about to read the Anti-Patronage petition, he rose up and interrupted me, and desired to know whether he would be now allowed to speak. I replied that the meeting being called for a special purpose, I wanted to know whether his speech was connected with the business before us. That, he would not say; but always replied we would know when we heard it.

"It then occurred to me that the plan we took with Dr. John Ritchie would be the only way of managing him; and I accordingly said to him, that before we could enter upon the question of his speaking, he must allow us to finish the business for which I had called the meeting; and this, upon an appeal from him to Bank, our chairman, being reiterated by Bank, he sat down. When I was through, I then called up Lee to dissolve the meeting by the blessing; and P——, now rising and appealing to the meeting to be heard, and his motion to be heard being seconded by N——, who cried, 'You'll get the

people to stay and hear you, P——,' I said he would allow me to say a few words before I left. I then addressed the people, told them that I had the right to the church, though this I would not insist upon in the way of forcibly emptying the house and locking the door; that I intended now to leave the house, and that if they regarded their own character—if they wished well to the religious objects for which we had met, and if they did not desire that the peace and harmony of religious meetings should be disturbed—they would leave the house with me; when, greatly to the credit of the people, and much to my gratification, and as much, I have no doubt, to the mortification of P——, N——, and some low characters they had with them, the whole congregation rose and ran out *en masse;* everybody apparently trying who would get out first, many only whirling round as they were going out at the door, with a laugh upon their face, to see how P—— and his coadjutors were taking their utter defeat.

"He and his friends saw it would not do, and they marched with the rest; and since Arbirlot was a church I am sure it has not been so soon cleared. P—— went away in a cart, raging like a dragoon. Three panes of glass broken in the new manse finished the proceedings, which, as you may suppose, is laid to his door and his friends."

This letter was written to Provost Guthrie in Brechin. Quantities of letters from Arbirlot Manse, on all manner of topics, addressed to him, now lie before us. Mr. Guthrie has described that brother (his senior by sixteen years), as a man of "powerful intellect and gigantic memory," and has alluded to his joining the Seceders along with his mother and sister. Few men ever lived a more godly and guileless life. For him his brother had a special affection, and such was his estimate of his sagacity, that he consulted him on all matters of importance, and placed great weight on his opinion. In the letters that passed between the brothers in these Arbirlot days, while exchanging their views on many matters both in Church

and State, there are constant allusions to the working of the manse glebe, on which the minister writes with almost a farmer's zest; indeed, but for the opening or closing paragraphs, which are generally on more important subjects, one would conclude they were written by one enthusiastic agriculturist to another. Provost Guthrie, though not himself a professional farmer, knew a great deal about country matters, and was in the habit of visiting the manse of Arbirlot regularly every few weeks all the year round. A man of six feet high and twenty-two stones in weight, he performed the journey of fifteen miles on foot by choice: arriving at the manse on a Friday, he remained till the Monday following, and then walked back again to the old Burgh, over whose affairs he presided for eighteen successive years, and where, amid the regret of the entire community, he died in 1854.

In addition to his glebe, Mr. Guthrie farmed forty acres of land, which he rented from Lord Panmure. He refers in his Autobiography to his acquaintance with crops, stock-rearing and feeding, &c. We have heard him tell of his amusement, if not annoyance, at a visit paid to him one evening in the manse by a decent countrywoman, who was ushered into his study, and who had, he at first supposed, come to consult him as her pastor on some subject relating to her highest welfare. "They tell me, sir," Mrs. —— commenced to say, "that ye bring up grand calves, the best in a' the pairish; and I've just come ower to hear what's your plan!"

The manse garden bore witness to his taste and toil.

"When I was at Arbirlot," he said in 1853, "I used to spend a pleasant portion of time in my lovely garden, and I can speak from experience of the sweet and soothing influence of garden exercise. Such a hold had that garden taken of me, that I was years in Edinburgh before I could forget it." He planted a thousand young trees around his new manse, and, in after visits to Arbirlot, he noted their progress with the greatest interest. For the animal as well as the vegetable world he had a singular liking, and his enjoyment in studying the humblest of God's creatures was intense. We have seen him in after years so intent on watching, under the shade of a fir-wood, the busy population of a dissected ant-hillock, that he was insensible to the fact of a whole hour's having thus passed away. He kept a careful note of weather changes, and not many shepherds or sailors could better discern the face of the sky than he. In short, had he felt at liberty to devote his time while a country minister to the pursuits of a naturalist, he might have penned a book well-nigh as interesting as the "Natural History of Selborne." He rode on horseback occasionally while at Arbirlot, but exercise on foot he chiefly enjoyed. He had the physique of a thorough pedestrian; and to this day the older parishioners tell of the tall lithe figure which they remember stalking along the highways and byways of the parish, reading almost always as he went—a big crooked stick tucked under the left arm—while his dog "Bob" trotted at his heels. So intent was he at times on his book, that he has been seen to stumble into a ditch

by the roadside; and yet, if any of his people happened to be working in the field near by which he passed, he never neglected to hail them with a hearty word and smile, and wave of his long right arm.

The circumstances which brought Mr. Guthrie forth from his comparatively narrow sphere at Arbirlot, illustrate how an event, seemingly trivial at the moment, may have important though improbable issues. These circumstances were brought vividly back to his mind a few years ago in London, when he happened, along with a friend* from whom we have the anecdote, to be lunching at Lawrence's chop-house, in the Strand. Mr. Bunting crossed the room to speak to a Wesleyan provincial minister of his acquaintance. "Who is your friend?" Dr. Guthrie inquired from Mr. Bunting on his return to his side. "I have surely seen that face before." "A Mr. Kendal," was the reply. "Was he ever in Arbroath?" "He was." "Why, sir," said Dr. Guthrie, rising to cross the room, "*that is the man who made me!*" The explanation of this seemingly strange announcement is given in the Autobiography:—Mr. Guthrie had come to the rescue of Mr. Kendal when threatened to be worsted by Dr. Ritchie at Arbroath in 1834; this again led to the meeting in reply to the Voluntary champion a few days thereafter; the morning after that meeting Mr. Guthrie woke to find himself famous; a deputation from the metropolis came to hear him, and the end of all was

* Thomas Percival Bunting, Esq., of Manchester.

his translation to the church of Old Greyfriars in Edinburgh.

But while it is true that his encounter with the champion of Voluntaryism on that memorable night in Arbroath was the first thing to draw towards him the attention of persons at a distance, his local reputation as a preacher before that date was such that it could not much longer have been confined to Forfarshire. Although he had never opened his mouth on a platform, and been destitute (as some other great preachers have been) of the humour and fancy which made his speeches so effective, he must ere long have had to contemplate leaving the church of Arbirlot.

"I have a vivid remembrance," writes Dr. Macfarlane, his college friend, "of hearing your father preach at Carnoustie on the Monday after the Sacrament there. He was then recently settled at Arbirlot, and was little known as a preacher. The effect produced on my mind was never to be effaced. His graphic power—the distinctness with which he pictured the scenes he described—was such as to transport his hearers to the times and the places he brought before them. When he quoted and illustrated the passage, 'then all the disciples forsook him and fled,' you would suppose that you saw each of them with the varying expression of anxiety or terror or irresolution that betokened their character, making their escape by every accessible avenue, and leaving their Master unbefriended in the hands of His enemies. I was at that time myself a very young minister; had never heard anything like this from the pulpit; felt how hopeless it was to attempt such a line of things. But I was sure that such a preacher would soon be carried off to a higher sphere."

The "higher sphere" was ere long opened to Mr. Guthrie. But it was none of his seeking. "I feel no ambition,"—he wrote some time after this, in reply to a

letter from Edinburgh desiring permission to place his name on the list of candidates for a city charge,—"I feel no ambition to be an Edinburgh minister; and, were ambition my ruling principle, I would rather be first in my own village than second in Rome."

The gentleman to whom these words were written was the chief instrument in bringing Mr. Guthrie away from Arbirlot. Mr. Dunlop, then practising at the Bar in Edinburgh, afterwards Member of Parliament for Greenock, and distinguished in the Councils of the Free Church as her "Legal Adviser," formed so early as 1833 an intimate acquaintanceship with Mr. Guthrie, and was possessed by the determination to see him somehow removed to Edinburgh. Many letters, singularly cordial and affectionate, were addressed by Mr. Dunlop to the manse of Arbirlot in 1836 and 1837. In the former of these years, he went north to hear Mr. Guthrie preach, with a view to the new Church Extension parish of Greenside, Edinburgh, in the erection of which he had taken a chief interest. He pressed Mr. Guthrie to stand as a candidate, but found him resolute against leaving his country parish.

Writing in 1837 with regard to another Edinburgh church, Mr. Dunlop had to combat the same reluctance on Mr. Guthrie's part to be drawn forth from his retirement:—

"*Edinburgh, June 15th*, 1837.

"My dear Friend,—Understanding you merely to have said that you would not so certainly at least refuse a *Cowgate* church,

I ventured, even in the face of your former positive rejection of Greenside, to mention your name to some of those interested in the Old Greyfriars, one of the charges in which is now vacant, and your name has been placed upon the list. . . . . You must consider that we are getting up a new church here, in order to uncollegiate the present double charge, and try the parochial system in good style in the regions of the Cowgate, and you must be satisfied that you are peculiarly adapted for conducting such an experiment. Therefore do think seriously before you refuse. . . . .

"Forgive me for continuing to bother you on this subject, even though I will not promise to desist till I absolutely 'howk' you out of your 'earth!'

"Believe me, with much affection, yours very truly,

"ALEX. DUNLOP."

The humorous allusion with which Mr. Dunlop closes this letter reminds one of a figure somewhat similar applied to the position of the famous author of the "Analogy," while yet a country rector: — Queen Caroline, consort of George II., in conversation one day with Archbishop Blackburn, asked him if Mr. Butler was dead. "No, madam," was the reply, "Mr. Butler is not dead, but he is buried!"—alluding to his close retirement in the country parish of Stanhope.

At the very time when Mr. Guthrie's way in Providence seemed opening out from a sphere of like obscurity to one of reputation and influence,—when attention had been directed to his qualifications for one of the high places of the field —God was pleased to lay him aside for a season under a malady so grave that he was brought within near view of another world. The light which had been comparatively hidden under a bushel had recently attracted friendly eyes, and just while friendly hands were outstretched to set it on

a candlestick, the light itself was all but extinguished. His illness in 1837 made a profound impression on him, and he often spoke of it in after years as a memorable era in his history. In addition to his own reminiscences of that illness in his Autobiography, a cousin who watched by his bedside in Brechin tells, that he repeatedly expressed his conviction that he would never rise from his sickbed. He spoke much and often of his children (four in number at that time, and one a mere infant). Clasping his hands one night, he exclaimed, "Oh, what would I do without a Saviour now!" For a whole month he was very low, and for three days and nights his life was literally despaired of. His brother, Dr. Alexander Guthrie, attended him unremittingly, and at length thought it right to summon three other medical men.

The Lord afflicted His servant sore, but did not give him over to death. There were added to the thirty-four years of his life fully as many more, in which the Master had important work for him to do. Our informant remembers what is very characteristic—that when Mr. Guthrie was fairly on the highway to recovery, his humour and buoyancy of spirits were surprising. His brother wanted him to keep very quiet; but as soon as the doctor's back was turned, he would talk as much as ever. So amusing and racy was his conversation to those about him, that people passing the opened window or door were amazed at the peals of laughter that issued from the sick chamber; and even through the night he would discourse

to the solitary watcher with as much vivacity as if he were entertaining a large company!

Mr. Guthrie had returned but a few months to his country parish and his pastoral work when renewed invitations were addressed to him from Edinburgh.

His way was at length shut up; and on the 29th June, 1837, he thus wrote to Mr. Dunlop:—

"Without enlarging on my doubts and difficulties and fears, and prayers that I might hear a voice saying "This is the way, walk ye in it,' let me just tell you that if I should be elected by the Council to Old Greyfriars, I have almost come to the resolution to accept the appointment, and to consider it as a call which I am not warranted to reject in deference to my fears and feelings.

"But now with one church and another (for I have been offered two churches, and solicited to stand as candidate for a third, in this part of the country) my parish has been kept, almost ever since I came to it, in a constant state of doubt as to my remaining here, the effects of which are injurious both to my comfort and my usefulness; and I feel this so much that, though you may think it an unreasonable request, yet I must beseech you to ascertain how the Council stands, and to withdraw my name if you are not morally certain I will be chosen. Had I sought the place, had I taken a single step to procure it, such a request would have been very absurd; but for various reasons with which I will not now trouble you, I cannot otherwise consent to my name remaining on the list. . . . . "*

In the interval of suspense Mr. Guthrie received from Mr. (now Dr.) Begg the following letter, which doubtless

* It was on the following day he wrote to Mr. Dunlop the letter to which he refers in the Autobiography, and in which he insisted on his name being withdrawn, stating, "I have learned that it is likely a Moderate man will be elected." This letter, as he mentions, Mr. Dunlop "kept safe and silent till the election was over."

tended to confirm his resolution to go, if elected, to Edinburgh:—

"*Liberton Manse, July* 1*st.* 1837.

"My dear Sir,—I am truly happy to learn that there is a great chance of your being appointed one of the ministers of Edinburgh on Tuesday. And I have been requested to write you as I now do, requesting that in that event you will not refuse the situation. Of course, I know the comforts and advantages of a quiet country parish, and the many reasons which may induce you to remain where you are. But it is of vast importance, not merely to Edinburgh, but Scotland—not for the present generation only, but for ages—that we should have men of energy and popular talent in Edinburgh. Never was there a finer opening. The new church in the Cowgate may be entirely *free from seat-rents*, except as much as shall pay the precentor, &c., if the minister is a determined person—and what a glorious example to Scotland! What an exposition of the advantage of an Established Church! . . . .

"Believe me ever, dear sir, yours very affectionately,

"James Begg.

"P.S.—I know no man in Scotland so well fitted for the situation as yourself.—J. B."

The announcement of his appointment reached him by express in a letter written by Robert Johnstone, Esq., W.S., then a member of the Town Council:—

"2 *Scotland Street, 4th July*, 1837.

"My dear Sir,—I have taken the deepest interest in the proceedings relative to the appointment of a successor to Dr. Anderson, and as one who has taken this interest for the sake of the Church of Christ in this quarter, I sincerely rejoice in your appointment this day by a majority of seventeen to thirteen of the Town Council. May the Great Head of the Church bless and strengthen you for your great and arduous work! Under your guidance and countenance, I have no doubt that the new church proposed for the Greyfriars will be speedily begun, and accommodated to the peculiar situation of the district. You have a glorious experiment entrusted to your care, in the progress of which many will wait for your halting; but many, and I trust I shall be of the number, will

offer up to a Throne of Grace earnest prayers for its complete success. You will have your own session, and the free formation of all the other parts of the parochial machinery; and that you will find to be of an immense advantage to you. . . "

After the interview with Lord Panmure, of which Mr. Guthrie speaks in the Autobiography, he wrote to Mr. Dunlop from Brechin on 7th July, 1837:—"Though I foresee that in leaving Arbirlot I am to lacerate my feelings, yet I am now satisfied that it is my duty to accept the appointment to Edinburgh, and in doing so, to take up my cross and follow Him to whose service I desire entirely to devote myself. I count on your prayers that I may be strengthened for the great work; I count on your indulgence towards my imperfections and infirmities; and I count on what has more than anything else contributed to bring me to the resolution of accepting—your countenance, advice, and co-operation; and although I have fears, yet with the help of the Lord I will do my utmost to save you from the pain of being ashamed of me."

The parting, when it did at length come, was a sore wrench to Mr. Guthrie, and one can well credit the account of the scene in church at the farewell sermon,—"They were a' greetin'."

One worthy parishioner, however, made no secret of his disapproval of the step his minister had reluctantly taken; of which his widow, in extreme old age, reminded Dr. Guthrie in the following amusing way many years thereafter. Dr. Guthrie, along with Mr. Thomson, after an interval of more than thirty years, called on "Babby"

(Barbara) Dundas in her cottage at Arbirlot. Babby was then (1871), in her ninety-seventh year, sitting up in a "press-bed."

Mr. Thomson went in before the Doctor to prepare the old dame for the visit:—

Mr. Thomson (loquitur). "You'll not guess who has come to see you to-day, Babby?"

Babby. "No, sir; I hae nae a notion."

Mr. Thomson. "Your old minister has come to call on you."

Babby (calmly). "Maister Guthrie, is 't? Bid him to come in."

Dr. Guthrie, entering, says in a kindly tone, "And how are you, Babby?"

Babby (with spirit). "Ou, thank ye, Maister Guthrie, I'm just in my ordinar'. You're lookin' gey caller* yersel'."

Dr. Guthrie (solemnly). "Your husband† was a good man, Babby."

Babby (leaning forward to the front of her press-bed, responds rapidly). "Aye; but he ne'er forgi'ed you for breakin' the pastoral tie!" (and then, shaking her head), "he didna approve o'd, I assure ye; and he wudna gang to hear yer farewell sermon either!"

But, however unwilling his own flock were to let him go, Mr. Guthrie's friends elsewhere hailed the news of his translation to a sphere more worthy of him with delight: and from the many letters of congratulation he

* Pretty fresh. † See Autobiography, p. 142.

received, we select one from the late Rev. Thomas Doig, for whom Dr. Guthrie had a very special liking and regard. Mr. Doig's father (a minister in Aberdeen) was a friend of Mr. Guthrie's parents, and the acquaintance between Mr. Doig and himself was almost lifelong. Mr. Doig had been a minister in Arbroath, from which he was translated to Torryburn, in Fife, where he died in 1866.

On hearing of the appointment to Old Greyfriars, Mr. Doig wrote from Torryburn, 16th July, 1837:—

"I cannot refrain from expressing my joy on the occasion of your appointment to the Old Greyfriars, a place which I consider exactly suited to you, and where, I have no doubt, you will be the means of doing much good. You are aware (although you have better views than to make it a matter of boasting) of the influence which you have happily been enabled to exercise in the neighbourhood of Arbroath; and it is with no little pleasure that I look forward, if spared to see it, to your exercising a corresponding influence in a far wider and more extended sphere of usefulness.

". . . . . The feeling of deep interest with which, in my mind, your appointment is associated, is not a little increased when I think of the particular pulpit which, in the meantime at least, you are called to fill. The Old Greyfriars I regard as a sacred place; within its walls the first signatures were appended to the Covenant; and I doubt not many on that day felt that the Lord was there. The ground that encircles it is sacred, and the man must be dead to all feeling whose soul is not stirred within him, when everything that meets his view reminds him that he is 'compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,' and brings him into contact with 'the noble army of martyrs.' May you ever exhibit the spirit of a Guthrie, and may the Lord be with you! . . . . "

It was matter of profound satisfaction to Mr. Guthrie to know that his place in Arbirlot was to be filled by one who would "take heed to the ministry, and fulfil it." His successor was his intimate friend and co-presbyter.

the Rev. John Kirk, of Barry, who joined the Free Church at the Disruption of 1843, and died at Arbirlot in 1858.*

In connection with Mr. Guthrie's appointment to Edinburgh, Dr. McCosh writes:—

"My co-presbyters said, 'We like Thomas Guthrie; but he is not the man for Edinburgh, where they need a scholarly and refined man.' I expressed my conviction that, as human nature was much the same everywhere, one who could draw men's hearts in Arbroath would draw them in Edinburgh; and closed the discussion by saying that time would soon show who was right.

"Before he went to Edinburgh, I had many anxious conversations with him. 'Many people,' said he, 'have been recommending me to change my style, and make it more elegant. But I am to preach in Edinburgh as I have preached in Forfarshire. If they do not care for me, I will leave them, and look out for a quiet country place.' He read me the sermon which he meant to preach the first Sabbath he was in Edinburgh. It was one of his Arbirlot sermons slightly amended.

"So he had to part with his beloved country congregation. I was with him and his family the day they sailed from Arbroath; and I remarked that, though he had passed through what he had felt to be a heavy trial, his spirits were as exuberant as ever. I have seen him in all sorts of situations, and I never saw his soul flat or depressed. In this respect, I never knew any one to be compared with him."

"Well do I remember," said Dr. Guthrie in a speech nearly thirty years thereafter, "when the shore and wooded heights of Arbirlot went down beneath the wave —faded from my sight—of walking the deck of the steamer, wondering at the boldness of those who gave me the presentation to Edinburgh, and at my own boldness in accepting it. Yet, as the venture was not of my own seeking, I hoped in God, took courage, and went forward."

* One of Mr. Kirk's sons is the well-known Dr. John Kirk, Her Majesty's Consul-General at Zanzibar.

CHAPTER IV.

SETTLEMENT IN EDINBURGH.—CONDITION OF HIS PARISH.

EDINBURGH was Dr. Guthrie's home for the latter half of his life. Living there, he could adopt Paul's words and say, "I am a citizen of no mean city." To him, her craggy heights and classic beauty were a source of daily enjoyment; and when visitors from other lands were his guests, he delighted to point out to them the unique features of the "gray metropolis of the North." "Ere the heat of day," to use his own words, "has cast a misty veil upon the scene, I take a stranger, and conducting his steps to yonder rocky rampart, I bid him look. Gothic towers and Grecian temples, palace, spires, domes, monuments, and verdant gardens, picturesquely mingled, are spread out beneath his eye; wherever he turns, he finds a point of view to claim his admiration. What rare variety of hill and hollow! What happy combination of ancient and modern architecture! Two distant ages gaze at each other across the intervening valley." Standing thus on the Castle rock, Dr. Guthrie would quote, with all Sir Walter's enthusiasm, the famous lines from *Marmion*:—

"Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!"

But the older parts of Edinburgh possessed, in Dr. Guthrie's eyes, one special feature of interest with which the great novelist had less sympathy,—their association with the Covenanters and the sufferings of two hundred years ago for civil and religious liberty:—

"How much of undying interest," to quote his own words, "does our city owe to the localities with which this cause is associated! There rose the gallows on which the best and worthiest of our land were hung like caitiffs; yonder, half-way between that castle and the palace was the gate above which their heads stood in ghastly rows, bleaching in the wind and rain and sun; and here, the neighbourhood of this very church is sacred ground. This winding street, these low-browed windows, and the old quaint tenements that see us quietly gathering for Sabbath worship were crowded, two hundred years ago, with the spectators of a different,—if not a holier,—certainly a more stirring scene. 'They come!' runs through the crowd, and turns all eyes on the advancing procession. And there, with slow but firm step, comes hoar old age, and noble manhood, and—most wept for by mothers and maidens, fair gentle youth—a band of candidates for martyrdom; witnesses for Christ's royal rights; heroes who held it noble for such a cause to die.

"In truth our fathers set a higher value on Christ's Headship than on their own heads; and for it alone no less than eighteen thousand were faithful unto death."

These words were spoken from the pulpit of St. John's Free Church, on the Castle-hill. Just below, lies the Grassmarket, where so many of the Covenanters, James Guthrie among the number, were executed; and on the southern slope beyond, is the ancient burial-place, where their hallowed dust awaits the resurrection morn. This sacred spot is "The Greyfriars Churchyard," in the centre of which stands the church of the same name to which Mr. Guthrie was translated from Arbirlot.

The very name of that church savours of antiquity; and suggests a time when, on the streets of Edinburgh, as still on those of Rome, might be encountered sandalled friars, black, white, and grey. The church in which Mr. Guthrie preached, though not built till fifty years after the Reformation, retained the name of its site;—a large monastery of grey friars having stood there. At the Reformation the monastery was broken up, and the Town Council of Edinburgh set apart its hanging gardens as a new burying-place in 1562. In 1837, the Greyfriars Church was a long, heavy edifice, its exterior unsightly even; divided within by a partition into two places of worship, the eastern of which was called "Old Greyfriars," to distinguish it from the western and more recent building, called the "New."

The historical interest of this church and its graveyard is very great. Here on 28th February, 1638, the

National Covenant was signed by numbers within the church itself, the old Earl of Sutherland setting the example: thereafter, the parchment was carried out to the open air, and, laid on a raised horizontal grave-stone, was surrounded by a moved and mighty multitude. "They were not content to sign it with ink. Ah! there were *men* in those days; they were seen to open a vein in their arms and fill their pens with their blood, to mark how they would shed that blood when the battle-day came; and nobly did they redeem their pledges."—(*Speech in* 1839.)

In 1679, a detached portion of the churchyard was employed as a prison for six hundred Covenanters, taken after the defeat at Bothwell Bridge; here, for four weary months, they were exposed day and night to the open sky, and barely kept alive by provisions supplied to them through the iron gates. All around, on the mouldering gravestones, the eye falls on many names of renowned Scotchmen:—George Buchanan, George Heriot, Alexander Henderson, Colin Maclaurin, President Forbes of Culloden, Allan Ramsay, Principal Robertson, Dr. Erskine, Thomas McCrie, and many more lie here. The "Martyrs' Monument" alone draws visitors from many lands to this burial-place. "However deep," says Hugh Miller, "the snow may lie in Greyfriars' Churchyard, there is one path where the snow is always beaten down, and that leads to the monument of the Covenanters."

Mr. Guthrie was keenly alive to the power of all these associations with the past. But he was much

more affected by the thought that just outside the walls of that churchyard, with its martyred saints and names of renown, were multitudes of living dead—men and women in the wretched dwellings of his parish, dead to God, to hope, and to heaven.

He came up by himself from Arbirlot to preach his "trial" sermons on two successive Sundays in the Old Greyfriars, and returned thereafter to Forfarshire for Mrs. Guthrie and his children. Writing to his eldest brother from Edinburgh in August, 1837, he says:—"The people were uncommonly still and attentive, and I have reason to believe I preached to their acceptance. Had this not been the case, I learn from a Mr. Dymock,* a keen partizan of mine, that the Moderates of the Kirk-Session were so angry at my appointment that they would have tried the Veto. I don't believe they would have had the pluck.

"I take the house in Argyll Square to-night, and leave Edinburgh to-morrow, wonderfully thankful that

* Mr. James R. Dymock, afterwards one of Mr. Guthrie's elders, to whom we are indebted for many of the particulars in this chapter. In a letter to Mr. Dymock from London, in 1864, Dr. Guthrie thus referred to their long-continued friendship:—"Yours was the first face that caught my attention on the first day I appeared in the Old Greyfriars pulpit. I was in a rather delicate and certainly to me a new and strange position; and I well remember the satisfaction and thankfulness I felt when I saw by a gleam on your face before I had reached my third sentence that I had reached you, at least. And how has a friendship, which I always date from that moment, gone on like a river, without a break or cataract, deepening, widening, and strengthening as it advances; advances toward that better world, I trust, where we shall ever be with each other and all with our blessed and beloved Lord!"

we have made such a good beginning, and that I have neither disgraced myself, my friends, nor the men who supported me here."

On September 21st, he was inducted as colleague to the Rev. John Sym. When, in after years, Dr. Guthrie heard of other ministers experiencing difficulties in intercourse and work with their colleagues, he used to speak of God's goodness in sparing himself any such trial, and of his happiness while associated with the late Mr. Sym in Greyfriars, and then with Dr. Hanna in St. John's. Mr. Sym was a man whom one might have associated in idea with the beloved Apostle John; and in brotherly fellowship with such a minister, and in the joint care of a large and important flock, Mr. Guthrie might have spent many happy years, and found his energies fully employed. But it was on the express understanding that he should, ere long, be released from the pulpit of Old Greyfriars, and have a field cut out for himself from that too large parish, that he consented to come to Edinburgh at all. This district was to form one of the new Church Extension parishes, whose history is associated with the name and exertions of Dr. Chalmers.

The position he occupied in his first Edinburgh parish he soon felt to be anomalous; for while from his pulpit each Sunday he looked on an overflowing congregation, drawn from all quarters of the city, and composed chiefly of the middle and upper classes, he saw scarce any representatives, alas! of his real parishioners from the mean and crowded district hard by.

To do justice to his ordinary congregation, and to his parish likewise, he felt to be simply impossible. He was speaking from his own experience when he thus addressed the Rev. J. Julius Wood,* at whose induction to the adjoining church of New Greyfriars he presided on 5th June, 1839 :—

"If in your former charge you felt the need of much pains and much prayer, you will now, more than ever, feel that they have here laid on your back a burden far heavier, without Divine assistance, than you can bear. In a town or country parish of more moderate size, one can sometimes enjoy rest from labour without feeling that the rest they take and the rest they need is stolen from some deathbed where they should have been praying, from some duties they should have been discharging. In such a sphere one gets a breathing-time ; here we are set to labour in a field far surpassing the powers of any man. The weeds grow faster than you can cut them down, demands come far thicker than you can answer them ; and let any man try to do here all that should be done, he might have a bright course of it, but he would have a short one—he would soon rest in the grave from all his labours. Within the walls of this church there will assemble a congregation greater than you can cultivate to your own satisfaction or to their profit ; but over and above all this, matters are so miserably ill-arranged that they lay upon you the charge of some thousands of souls in your parish, more than sufficient themselves to occupy your undivided care and energies. Happier times may come, and happier arrangements may be made : but, in the meantime, I feel assured that though you cannot do your whole work, you will give your whole self to the ministry."

No doubt, Mr. Guthrie's pulpit gifts were very advantageous to the Town Council in drawing large seat-rents, every penny of which the Municipality appropriated. But, meanwhile, his parishioners, being poor, were unable to pay these high seat-rents ; many of them so extremely poor, as to

* Now the Rev. J. J. Wood, D.D., of Dumfries.

be unable to pay any seat-rent at all. This state of things, while it lasted, became increasingly irksome to him. As he put it in many of his speeches at this period, the very popularity of a minister was a misfortune to his parish:—

"I know to my sad experience, that while the inhabitants of my parish have been told that they have a church within it, to them, at least, that church is not accessible. In passing up and down the Cowgate, I have observed a public well, where all comers, old and young, the richer and the poorer, draw water without distinction, without money and without price,—they bring their pitcher without their penny; and as I have seen that stream often flowing as free and full to the poor as to the rich, just as it should be (seeing that the one need it as much as the other), how often have I wished that the parish church was more like the parish well, a well of salvation where all might draw water and drink. I go away to visit my parish, I enter a house—and many such have I entered—where, unless the God that hears the young ravens cry help them, the parents know not where they are to get food to fill the mouths of four or five hungry children. For years, they have never crossed the threshold of a church door. The bell has rung over them every Sabbath day, and they have never known a Sabbath. I've seen them with tears in their eyes acknowledge their sin, and when they were brought to confess and lament it, where then do I stand? Some one says, "Bid them come to the church.' Bid a man go to the City Chamberlain and pay six shillings for a seat, who would bless you for six pennies that he might buy meal for his children! 'Send him to the pauper seats;' and what right have you to make any man a pauper in God's House, especially under an Establishment to all the benefits of which the poor man has as good a right as the rich? No man likes to be branded before his fellows as a pauper, as was expressed to me some time ago by a person who had not been attending church, who gave his poverty as a reason, and to whom I said he would soon be without that excuse, telling him that we would get a church with seven hundred free sittings. 'Ah! sir,' said he (falling into the mistake that ours were to be pauper sittings), 'I'll wait till I can make up five shillings, for I have no notion of being set among these pauper bodies!'" —(*Speech in* 1838.)

The more Mr. Guthrie got acquainted with the real condition of this population, the more he grew impatient for the time when he could throw himself entirely into the working of the strictly parochial system. This implied a church at the very doors of the poor, the entire area of which should be free to all residents in the parish without distinction; properly-equipped schools; elders, deacons, and district visitors to aid him in his work; such an organization, in short, as should secure the literal carrying out of the blessed truth, "To the poor the gospel is preached." But all this needed time; arrangements had to be made with the Town Council as the municipal authorities, and with the Presbytery as the ecclesiastical authorities; a site had to be secured, and a large sum of money raised ere such an experiment in the parish of Old Greyfriars could be fairly set a-going.

Meanwhile, he delighted to take his turn in the service for the poor, which Mr. Sym had, some years before, commenced in the old Magdalene Chapel in the Cowgate:—"With my excellent and able colleague, I have a parish where there are two congregations. We have in the Greyfriars Church a congregation of ladies and gentlemen, and in the Magdalene Chapel we have a not less interesting—to me, in some respects, a more interesting—congregation, in so far as it contains some who, like the lost sheep of the wilderness, have been brought back by the parochial system graciously and rejoicingly to the fold they had left. Very lately the Lord's Supper

was dispensed in our church, when both these congregations mingled together. It delighted me to see a street beggar, to whom I, as well as others, had often given charity, decently attired, and sitting side by side with the wealthy at the table of our common Lord."—(*Speech in* 1839.)

For the first two or three years of his Edinburgh ministry, the localities with which Mr. Guthrie was chiefly familiar were its dark places. He might have been met almost every day in the week visiting from cellar to garret the crowded homes of his neglected parishioners. He could not be satisfied to leave the care of his poor parishioners to a paid missionary, however valuable his aid might be; much less quiet his conscience after the fashion of an old Edinburgh minister in the last century whose parish embraced a population as degraded as Mr. Guthrie's:—the story goes, that once a year he approached the mouth of each several "close" in his district—down whose dark vista of sin and misery, however, he never penetrated—and there, uncovering his head with due solemnity, and lifting his gloved right hand, he besought the Divine blessing to rest on "all the inhabitants, young and old, of this close." The annual "visitation" thus ended, he went on his way!

Writing from Arbirlot, some months before his translation to Edinburgh, to Mr. Dunlop, Mr. Guthrie said:—

"I would have delighted in the Cowgate, had I felt myself bodily and mentally fit for such a charge. . . . . Can't you

carry a bill through the Edinburgh Presbytery against non-residence? I am satisfied that is the root of much evil and inefficiency among your city clergy. I heard three fellows [here] one day swearing boldly. I was no sooner seen than I heard 'Whish't man, there's the minister!' Now, I should like a clergyman never to step out of his own door but he steps in among his people. I would have him planted in the very centre of his population. He would not only by this means be able to do a great deal more work, and spend little odds and ends of time among his flock that would be lost to them if he were living a mile or half a mile away, but the very knowledge that the minister lived among them, that he could not look out of his windows nor step out of his own door without seeing them, that he was their next-door neighbour, and by that circumstance well acquainted with their character and conduct, would, I am confident, exert a reforming influence, especially on a Cowgate population. I have discovered from my own experience that the further the people are removed from the manse, the less influence has the minister over them: and if a man won't live among the scum of the Cowgate, I would at once say to him 'You can't be its minister.'"

When he came to Edinburgh, he virtually carried this theory into practice; having selected his first dwelling-house in Argyll Square, and the next in Brown Square (both of them in his parish), from either of which, two or three minutes' walk brought him into the most densely populated part of the district. Some of the houses there almost realise a quaint description given of the lofty tenements, ten or twelve storeys high, in the neighbouring Canongate—"perpendicular streets." A single house, No. 8, Cowgatehead, contained one hundred and fifty souls; so that, as Mr. Guthrie described it, it was literally a "small parish of itself."

Few men were better able than he to appreciate the many picturesque "bits" of the old town, in the artist's and antiquary's sense of the word; but for a

time, all other aspects of Edinburgh were forgotten amid the startling moral degradation to which his daily rounds introduced him. "It is all very well," he wrote to a friend at that time, "for men who see nothing but our noble castle, our spires and towers and palaces, to expatiate on the beauties of Edinburgh. They see but the whitewashing and ornaments of the sepulchre; if they would come with me to the Cowgate, or the College Wynd, or the Bow, I would let them see as much of the rottenness within as would break the charm."—(*Letter to Dr. Burns, of Tweedsmuir.*)

On coming home to dinner at his own house, we have heard him tell, "After the scenes of misery I had witnessed all day long, I would almost sicken at the sight of the comforts on my own table."

"3, *Argyll Square*, 19*th February*, 1838.

". . . . The frost was last week most intense, the thermometer was one morning at 15° at my window; but I had no time to think of cold, for of all the broken, busy weeks of my life here, it beat all—just listening, inquiring into, and, as far as possible, relieving cases of want in this severe weather. We are always on the verge of poverty, and you may conceive what [it] must be now, when the labourers and workmen of the Cowgate, for the last six weeks, have hardly earned one farthing. We have been holding a levée every morning and forenoon, and my wife has done nothing for some days last week but attend to such cases and distribute old clothes and

flannel, &c. Miss W. and she have just left on an expedition to the Cowgate to inquire into this morning's applications."*—(*To his brother, Provost Guthrie.*)

The Cowgate of Edinburgh, part of which was included in the parish of Old Greyfriars, lies along a shallow ravine, and its site often brought to Dr. Guthrie's mind the valley of the Prophet's Vision. The hand of the Lord had set him down, like Ezekiel, in the midst of the dry bones, and "caused him to pass by them round about," till the old question rang in his ears, "Can these dry bones live?" The Edinburgh Valley where he laboured is spanned at one point by George IV. Bridge. Looking there through the open work of the railings, the stranger sees with surprise not flowing water, but a living stream of humanity in motion beneath his feet:—

"It was there," writes Dr. Guthrie, "where one looks down on the street below, and on the foul, crowded closes that stretch, like ribs, down into the Cowgate, I stood on a gloomy day in the fall of the year '37. The streets were a puddle; the heavy air, loaded with smoke, was thick and murky; right below lay the narrow street of dingy tenements, whose toppling chimneys and patched and battered roofs were fit emblems of the fortunes of most of their tenants. Of these, some were lying over the sills of windows innocent of glass, or stuffed with old hats and dirty rags; others, coarse-looking women, with squalid

* When in St. John's Church, Mr. Guthrie established a Clothing Society to enable the more destitute parishioners to attend worship in decent attire. A gentleman, who, till he was attracted by Mr. Guthrie's preaching, was seldom to be seen in any church, gave largely from his own wardrobe. Recognising, as he looked down from the gallery on the audience in the area, here some coats, and there some vests that once were his own, he used jocularly to remark that he was glad to see himself so largely represented,—and thus, his own absence in days gone by made up for in a certain sense!

children in their arms or at their feet, stood in groups at the close-mouths—here with empty laughter, chaffing any passing acquaintance, there screaming each other down in a drunken brawl, or standing sullen and silent, with hunger and ill-usage in their saddened looks. A brewer's cart, threatening to crush beneath its ponderous wheels the ragged urchins who had no other playground, rumbled over the causeway, drowning the quavering voice of one whose drooping head and scanty dress were ill in harmony with song, but not drowning the shrill pipe of an Irish girl, who thumped the back of an unlucky donkey, and cried her herrings at 'three a penny.' So looked the parish I had come to cultivate; and while contrasting the scene below with pleasant recollections of the parish I had just left—its singing larks, daisied pastures, decent peasants, and the grand blue sea rolling its lines of snowy breakers on the shore, my rather sad and sombre ruminations were suddenly checked. A hand was laid on my shoulder. I turned round to find Dr. Chalmers at my elbow.

"This great and good man knew that I had accepted an Edinburgh charge mainly for the purpose of trying what the parochial or territorial system, fairly wrought, could do toward christianizing the heathendom beneath our feet, and restoring the denizens of the Cowgate and its closes to sober, decent, and church-going habits. Contemplating the scene for a little in silence, all at once, with his broad, Luther-like face glowing with enthusiasm, he waved his arm to exclaim, 'A beautiful field, sir; a very fine field of operation!'" — ("Out of Harness," p. 126.)

"I'll go down into the pit, if you will hold the rope," exclaimed the devoted missionary Carey, when parting with Christian friends for the shores of India in 1793. Mr. Guthrie used a figure somewhat similar when describing the sharp contrast between his present work and that of his Arbirlot charge:—"I can compare it to nothing else than the change from the green fields and woods and the light of nature to venturing into the darkness and blackness of a coal-pit!"

Yet, how true the lines of Cowper, when, with

reference to John Howard's resigning the amenities of country life, he sings:—

> "To quit the bliss that rural scenes bestow,
> To seek a nobler amid scenes of woe,
> Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal
> The boldest patriots might be proud to feel."

Mr. Guthrie's public appeals and private letters at this period were all aglow with the earnestness of one who had emerged from some doleful pit in whose depths he had beheld fellow-creatures perishing, body and soul, and for whom he entreated help. Those who never saw Dr. Guthrie, who never heard him speak, can scarcely realise the thrill of emotion sent through his audience as, with kindling eye and quivering lip, he thus addressed a vast meeting on Church Extension in the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms on 27th April, 1838:—

"I can never forget, nothing can ever efface the impression made on my mind, when I first lifted up the veil from the hideous scene of starvation and sin that lay before me. The scenes that I was called on to witness the first three or four days of my parochial visitations almost drove sleep from my pillow. They haunted me like very spectres, and, after visiting till my heart was sick, I have come up the College Wynd with the idea that I might as well have gone to be a missionary among the Hindoos on the banks of the Ganges.

"It appears from the report of the Government Commission, that in this city there are between forty and fifty thousand who habitually absent themselves from the house of God. It is astonishing how we can sit and listen so calmly to such a fact as that! Were a man to rush into this assembly and cry that on the other side of the street a house was on fire, and that some forty or fifty human beings were thronging its upper windows, and stretching out their hands for help, that news would go like an electric shock through this assembly. We would rise in a mass, and, trying who should be foremost, rush to their rescue. The feeble would give their prayers and their

tears, and, were it needed, their money too; and where is the man that would not plant his ladder against the smoking wall and peril his own life in the attempt to save others? There is this difference, my Lord, between that case and this, that here we have not forty or fifty, but, multiplying a thousandfold, we have forty, or fifty thousand; ay, and there is another difference—suppose we left them to perish—this fire will burn out, the shriek, like that of the widow of Hindostan, will rise on the air for a moment, and then all is over. But, if the Bible be true, there are nearly fifty thousand men and women in this city passing on to a punishment that shall never be over!"

On another occasion, when dealing with the fact that, by reason of their utter destitution, multitudes in his district not only wanted the will but the means of attending the parish church, he described the following case as an example:—

"I go away to visit my parish, and I find a widow left by the hand of Providence with a family of children hanging on her for support. There they are, shivering on a wintry day round a handful of embers raked up from the dust and rubbish of the streets. The infant in her arms looks as if it had never smiled, and reflects from its own pale, sickly face the settled sadness of its mother's. She tells you she was once a member of a Christian church, and the tears run down her cheeks as your questions bring back the recollection of other and happier days. But her husband sickened and died of a lingering illness; her Sabbath dress went to buy comforts for his dying bed, and then, when she closed his eyes, she was without friend on earth but neighbours, who were kind, but as poor as herself; and, to feed her hungry little ones, she parted with every comfort, till at length they were reduced to the rags they shiver in, and their home has not an article of furniture but a bed of straw, or, it may be, a broken chair. While she is telling this story, and you can hardly help weeping along with her, and you have begun to tell her of a Redeemer's love, the infant in her arms was crying (for I am now describing a reality), 'Give me a bit of bread;' and, constantly interrupted by its wail, I bade the mother give it some bread to keep it quiet, to still its cry. She burst into a flood of tears; and casting

a look of agony on her famished child, she told me that she had not in her house a morsel of bread nor wherewithal to buy it. There were five living beings in that house, without either a loaf or a handful of meal! Giving one of the children sixpence, I sent it out to fetch some bread. I have seen the wild beasts in a menagerie fed, but never saw those hungry animals fall with more keenness on their food than did these skeleton children."

It may not have been this same widow for whom he appealed in a sermon preached about this time; but we quote the following, from a letter to Brechin dated 30th November, 1839, as showing how early he discovered his power to open the hands as well as move the hearts of his hearers:—

"On Thursday I was preaching for the Ladies' Deaf and Dumb Society, and though the day was very unfavourable, we got £56, and in the evening there was other £5 sent to us anonymously. . . . . I happened to mention the case of a poor widow, who had attended, with her boy, the Magdalene Chapel regularly since I came here, but had been under the dire necessity of selling or pawning her Sabbath dress to get their bread, thereby shutting herself out of the house of God. Well, the circumstance came to my recollection as I was pleading for the deaf and dumb; it served me to illustrate some point; I threw it out, and the idea just flashed across my mind, 'the mentioning of this may get something to Widow A.,' and it was a capital cast of the net. Before I left the church a lady put into my hand two shillings for her. I dined with Sir Andrew Agnew, heard Cunningham's lecture, and then came home, where I found about £1 for the widow. Next morning the post brought me a letter with a guinea for her; then in came, in the course of an hour, five shillings more; in the course of the day, other ten shillings; in the evening came another pound; to-day in came other five shillings, and a little ago in came other five shillings. As to gowns, no less than half-a-dozen, made and unmade, floated in; liveried servants and fine cards (notes), all anonymous, have been pouring in about poor Mrs. A., who was here to-night, and has got her articles relieved, but has no earthly notion how rich she is, or what a stir her case has made in the aristocratic circles of this aristocratic

city. We have left her ignorant both of her riches and her fame, lest it should turn her head."

One of the well-worn little note-books he carried about with him in his visitations at that time now lies before us. It is touching to turn over its leaves, and to observe the minute care with which he noted down the details of the wretched households he visited. Here are the jottings from one page; the case seems to have been that of a poor widow with two daughters:—"Taylor's Land—Mother, 48—very delicate, sober; often not able to work—splitting wood. Anne 10—Mary 8—shake-down; pawned gown to help rent; also shift, petticoat of mother's, two frocks of girls', bonnet of her own; cut-down bedstead to sell; all to buy food; children would not want it." But, with all his kindness of heart, he took special care in selecting the objects of charity; knowing from unpleasant experience how much deception is practised by the denizens of such localities. He used to relate the following:—"I asked one old woman, who did not know who I was, where she went to church. 'Oh!' said she, 'I gang to the Greyfriars.' 'Which one? The Old or the New?' 'The Auld Greyfriars,' she replied. 'Ah! you go there, do you? What is the minister's name?' 'The minister, sir? It's Dr. Inglis, honest man, I was hearin' him the last Sabbath.' And this was said to me three or four years after Dr. Inglis was in his grave!"

It was during these early years of his ministry, and while visiting a district filled with the city's sins and

sorrows, that, under the guidance of God's Spirit, Mr. Guthrie was trained for that career of Christian philanthropy which made him so beloved through life, and for which, perhaps more than for all his other distinctions, his memory will continue to be fragrant. To a sensitive nature, it was a sharp training at the time,—literally, a sowing in tears; but the seed, on varied fields of benevolence, he afterwards reaped in joy. His experience during these years among the vicious and criminal class convinced him that effort must chiefly be directed to save the young. It was then and there he learned the motto of his whole ragged school work—"Prevention better than cure." Speaking at Birmingham of that period and his Cowgate experiences, he said in 1861, "I had not laboured three months in that parish, when I became perfectly satisfied of this—that it was impossible to raise the lower classes in towns, unless through the means of the rising generation. In labouring in that district I became also convinced of this—that the only way of reaching the rising generation of the lapsed masses of the community was by such ragged schools as have brought together this assembly."

He soon found, too, how the demon of intemperance confronted him, thwarting effort and disappointing hope; and we may doubtless trace to this same period the germ of those convictions which developed in later years into his adoption and advocacy of the total abstinence cause. "Seven years of my ministry," to quote his own words, "were spent in one of the lowest localities of Edinburgh; and it

almost broke my heart, day by day, to see, as I wandered from house to house, and from room to room, misery, wretchedness, and crime; the detestable vice of drunkenness, the cause of all, meeting me at every turn, and marring all my efforts. Nothing ever struck me more, in visiting those wretched localities, than to find that more than a half of these families were in the churchyard. The murder of innocent infants in this city by drunkenness 'out-Herods Herod.' I believe we will in vain plant churches and schools, though they be as thick as trees in the forest, until this evil is stopped."

Among the many claims which the illustrious Chalmers has to lasting gratitude, one of the strongest is that he was the first thoroughly to rouse the Christian community of Scotland to concern for the godless poor. He led the van in what Dr. Cooke of Belfast well called a "glorious enterprise of Christian aggression upon the regions of popular ignorance."

The revived spiritual life in the Church of Scotland forty years ago, was abundantly evidenced by the vigorous efforts which, in response to Chalmers' appeals, her people put forth to meet the spiritual wants of a rapidly increasing population. True, there may have been adherents of the National Church who advocated the Church Extension scheme chiefly as a means of strengthening and extending the Church of Scotland; but in the view of Dr. Chalmers and the true-hearted men who were associated with him, its grand object was to extend

the Church of Christ,—to save those who, in the large towns especially, because of the previous lethargy of the Establishment, had sunk into practical heathenism. Within the course of six years (from 1835 to 1841) upwards of £300,000 was voluntarily subscribed for the carrying out of this great scheme, and two hundred and twenty-two churches were erected.

The noble enterprise of Dr. Chalmers powerfully impressed Mr. Guthrie while yet a country minister. In his own county, he addressed meeting after meeting on its behalf, and aided in the erection of several Extension charges there. Still it was not till he became the minister of a large and destitute city parish, that his spirit was thoroughly stirred within him; the result of a practical acquaintance with the depth of the physical and spiritual destitution that appalled him on every hand.

Dr. Chalmers, then Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, rejoiced in the prospect of his favourite experiment being tried in a destitute district of the metropolis, and under the auspices of a man like Mr. Guthrie. It was transporting to Edinburgh the principles which he had himself worked so successfully in his parish of St. John's in Glasgow, and whose adaptation to all the large towns he never ceased to urge. At a second Church Extension meeting in Edinburgh, on 14th November, 1838, Dr. Chalmers spoke immediately after Mr. Guthrie, and in the following sanguine terms:—

"I look forward with high anticipation—it is by far the most interesting experiment within the present range of church

extension—to the erection that is now going on in the Cowgate; it is a most interesting subject of contemplation. I know that my friend Mr. Guthrie is a house-going minister, and I also know that this is the patent way to create a church-going people. I have a confident hope that by the blessing of God I shall yet live to see the day when, at the sound of its own parish bell, every house in the Cowgate and its collateral closes shall pour forth their families to attend that place of worship. . . . . I trust that when this arrangement shall be exemplified in the Cowgate, and multiplied over Edinburgh, it will be found that—what no adjustment of political or civil wisdom has been able to effect—the harmonization of all classes of society shall be at last effected through the medium of Gospel ministrations, and by the omnipotence of Gospel charity."

In these days, it was the decided conviction of Dr. Chalmers and his coadjutors that, in order to deal successfully with the spiritual destitution of the great towns, the only competent agency was an extension of the parochial system in connection with the State Church. With her revived spiritual life, her powers of self-government and internal reform developing each year, the Church of Scotland was doubtless at that period in circumstances singularly favourable for prosecuting the great experiment of Chalmers, and for extending the parochial system until it should overtake the whole of the godless out-field. What might have been the result of Dr. Chalmers' great scheme, had there been no disruption in 1843—had the undivided Church of Scotland been suffered calmly to prosecute the work she had so hopefully commenced—no man can now tell. However much we may regret it, the opportunity of thus fairly trying the experiment was not vouchsafed. God ordered it otherwise; and a vast addition was made to church accommodation

over all Scotland in a way that, at one time, men dreamt not of. But it was a sore trial and a grievous disappointment to Dr. Chalmers and many of his brethren, that when their Church seemed prepared to bend her whole energies to the blessed work of christianizing the home heathen, those energies had to be diverted into a field of conflict; for, while there were exceptions, the very same men who were the foremost in zeal for the cause of church extension, and whose hearts were the most alive to the condition of the home heathen, were the foremost also in contending for the Church's freedom from State control.

In these days Mr. Guthrie fully shared in Dr. Chalmers' conviction, that, apart from a national endowment, no Church could hope to stem the rising tide of vice and irreligion whose progress had become so formidable:—"I have read," he said in a speech in 1838, "of a cave from which the most thoughtless came out sobered, the most talkative came out silent; and I have often fancied that if I could get some Voluntary to accompany me on my parochial visitations for a single day, the College Wynd and the Cowgate would rival that cave in the wondrous change they would work on him. He might go in a Voluntary, but he would come out for an Establishment. A single day of my work would metamorphose him, and he would come forth with the conviction that Voluntaryism was not the lever which would move and lift up these people, and that there was no means of doing so but that thorough parochial system, and that pastoral superintend-

ence which is inseparable from an Establishment, never has existed with Voluntaryism, and, what is more, never can." On another occasion:—"Divide me the large towns into small manageable parishes, provide me with a free church, add to it an endowed school, and with a staff of zealous and active and Christian elders, I don't despair, with God's blessing, of restoring the waste places, making the wilderness rejoice and the desert glad; but that you can't get without an endowment. I say, therefore, petition for endowments."

Endowments were petitioned for; but the Government of the day was immovable. To quote the words of Dr. Chalmers when he spoke at the Bicentenary of the Westminster Assembly in July 1843—two months after the Disruption:—"Some years ago we tried what Government would do in the way of an endowment for the religious instruction of the people, and after many a weary and fruitless negotiation, got nothing for our pains." But what was Dr. Chalmers able to add? "We have now" (speaking in the name of the newly formed Free Church) "made our appeal to the Christian public, and in as few months, as we spent of years with the Government, we have obtained at the hands of the people the promise of towards £300,000."

Thirty years have passed away since these words were uttered; and who that is acquainted with the success of the Free Church in the Home Mission field during that period, can wonder that Mr. Guthrie lived to modify in large measure the views he had formerly entertained of

the exclusive efficiency of an Established Church to deal with the spiritual destitution of the land? The Free Church of Scotland, though she does not receive one shilling of state money, has planted church after church on the strictly territorial principle, in the densely peopled parts of the large towns, as well as in the mining districts of the country. She has gathered into them congregations from the non-churchgoers; by means of her central or "Sustentation" fund, she has supported there regularly trained pastors, who are effectively helped by a staff of elders, deacons, Sunday and day school teachers, and district visitors. Take that very valley in which Mr. Guthrie's own parish of St. John's lay; when he came to Edinburgh, scarce any genuine parochial work was attempted by the Established Church in the locality; and yet Dr. Guthrie lived to see no fewer than five Free churches—from the West Port Free Church at the one extremity, to Holyrood Free Church at the other—erected for the poor, and worked on the territorial principle.*

He felt more and more that the great work of bringing

* In Glasgow, the work done by the Free Church in the purely Home Mission field is still more remarkable. The following statement, which is dated 22nd September, 1873, has been forwarded to us by the Rev. R. Howie, who is intimately conversant with the facts. The Mission Church of which he tells has proved a Gospel hive indeed. Did other congregations throw off swarms in any like proportions, it were a blessed omen for the future of our great cities:—

"In 1854 the Wynd Church was planted in a district selected because it returned more police cases than any other in Glasgow. There have emanated from this *one Home Mission centre*, seven regularly sanctioned charges. The number received into the fellowship of these churches has been 9,526, of whom there have been 4,860 who either were never members of the Christian Church before, or had wholly lapsed from ordinances. There have been formed in addition, at least three churches

the Gospel to bear on the masses in the godless outfield must be accomplished on the voluntary principle, *whether within or without an Established Church.** And while the course of events weakened the confidence he once placed in national resources for the existence and efficiency of a Christian church, need we wonder if they greatly strengthened his faith in the zeal and generosity of a devoted Christian people?

This, however, it is important to observe:—while the final answer of Government to the Church's claim of spiritual independence made it impossible for Dr. Chalmers or Mr. Guthrie to remain any longer within the Establishment, they never altered their opinion as to the value and efficiency of the parochial or territorial system as the grand means of overtaking the spiritual destitution of the land. Thus, it was on the strictly territoial system that Dr. Chalmers, during the last years of his life, prosecuted his noble work in the West Port of Edinburgh; and in the course of our narrative we shall find that Dr. Guthrie, with his colleague Dr. Hanna, applied to the destitute district which they selected after leaving the National Church, the very principle they had advocated while within its pale.

in the country districts, which owe their origin to this same "Wynd Mission." Besides the large sums spent annually in maintaining these various agencies, the money expended on buildings alone has been upwards of £60,000.

* The justness of this conclusion is practically admitted by the Established Churches of the present day. The work now prosecuted by them amid the spiritual destitution of London and other great cities in England and Scotland, is the result, not of additional aid from the State, but of voluntary gifts.

What he longed, in later years, to see, was the adoption of some such scheme as he thus pictured in 1867 :—"Let the ministers or representatives of the different denominations within the city—Episcopalian, Baptist, and Independent, United Presbyterian, Free Church, and Established Church—meet, and form themselves into a real working Evangelical Alliance. Agreeing to regard all old divisions of parishes with an ecclesiastical right over their inhabitants as nowadays a nullity—and, so far as these are preventing Christian co-operation, and the salvation of the people, as worse than a nullity—let them map out the dark and destitute districts of the city, assigning a district to each congregation. Let every congregation then go to work upon their own part of the field, and giving each some five hundred souls to care for, you would thus cover 'the nakedness of the land.'"

Meanwhile—to resume our narrative—it was with the liveliest interest Mr. Guthrie watched the masons at work on his new church in the Nether Bow, now called Victoria Street. The building was commenced in 1838; and, on the completion of the school or basement storey, the Lord Provost laid the memorial-stone on the 17th April, 1839. The building was named St. John's, and was completed in 1840. "The honour," says the *Witness* of 21st November, 1840, "has been reserved for Mr. Guthrie, of course eminently qualified for the task, of making a distinct attempt to restore the old parochial system in the very centre of Edinburgh. His new church was opened

on Thursday, and the event formed an important era in the history of the Church of Scotland." *

The struggle for the spiritual independence of the Scottish Church, on which the Courts of Law threatened to encroach, was now thickening fast; and when at length, on the 19th November, 1840, Mr. Guthrie entered his new pulpit for the first time, it was not without apprehension that the time was approaching when, notwithstanding all his anxiety and effort for the erection of this new place of worship, he might have to quit it, a parish minister no longer. From that date until the Disruption in 1843, public calls on him increased in variety and number. So active a life did he lead, that, notwithstanding constant pastoral work and the share he took in the ecclesiastical agitation then in progress, the newspapers of that date contain speeches of his on all sorts of subjects — Sabbath Observance and Sunday Trains, Anti-Slavery, Gaelic Schools, Jewish Missions, &c., &c. At a public meeting, he was regarded as a host in himself; and, even at this early period, it was found that to reserve him (much to his own annoyance) as the last speaker was the surest way of retaining an audience to the close.

Thus, of necessity, a share of his time and energies was withdrawn from the important experiment which was now fairly launched in St. John's parish. Neither, however, apprehensions for the future, nor the exigencies of

* See Appendix B for some extracts from Mr. Guthrie's Opening Address.

the present, diminished his zeal in organizing and setting in motion the necessary machinery there. The gallery of the new church was let to applicants from all parts of the city; but six hundred and fifty sittings—the whole area of the church in fact—were reserved as absolutely free seats for residents in the parish, poor or rich, who applied for them.

"One ground of preference," he writes to his brother, "for the free sittings was, that parties had been regular sitters in the Greyfriars, and in reference to this, one family stated that they had not *sat* in the Greyfriars, but they had *stood* there for the last twelve months. We were unanimous in voting them sittings, thinking it was time for them now to sit! They will raise, from the 350 sittings in the gallery, £280. . . . . You know, I think, that the gallery is all let, and that we are obliged to refuse many applications. I intend to have about fifteen elders, to begin with, ordained in the course of a fortnight. We must by-and-by have the number [of elders] up to thirty; and then, besides them, we must have some fifteen deacons. We are abundantly filled with people, and you would be delighted to see the masses of common people who cram every corner and nook of the area.* The scheme takes grand with the parish people, and, with the blessing, I have no doubt of its success."

His elders—some of them professional men, and others in trade—had districts of the new parish allotted to them, in which they sought out the non-churchgoers, procured sittings for them, induced them to attend the house of God, and send their children to school. Each elder had a particular portion of the church likewise

* Not only were the passages in St. John's crowded, but Mr. Dymock informs us that around the ventilating apertures in the roof were seated, Sunday by Sunday, a goodly number of persons—out of sight, but within hearing—who were content to sit amid the foul air on pieces of planking laid across the rafters.

attached to his district, and could thus note the absentees, and hunt them up during the week.

In a speech in the Edinburgh Presbytery, 27th October, 1841, telling how the funds for St. John's were raised, Mr. Guthrie said:—"We had a church, but we wanted a school, and accordingly we commenced card-playing of a very lawful kind; and now we have got £500, which is all we require." This "card-playing" he explains in the following letter to his brother Patrick:—

"*Edinburgh*, 1*st July*, 1841.

"You will see by the newspapers what resolute efforts we are making to complete the sum required for our schools, and how marvellously well we have prospered. I announced from the pulpit a public meeting of my congregation on Tuesday, showing we would raise two or three hundred pounds without any further tax on ourselves. Curiosity was awakened: in *that*, I so far gained the object in view, to secure thereby a good attendance.

"On Tuesday I made a speech and produced my budget, showing that if we could get some hundred people or more to take each one of the enclosed cards, and undertake to fill it up with sixpence, one shilling, half-a-crown, and five shillings, from their neighbours and acquaintances, we would soon and easily raise the money. I explained to them how the sea is made up of rivers, and rivers of streams, and streams of rills, and rills of showers, and showers of drops, and that, by following nature, the Methodists thus raised a large part of the £90,000 they show yearly for missions. . . . . We had a nice meeting of the folks, embracing all classes, from the aristocrats at the top, to the mobocrats of the Grassmarket at the bottom of society. . . . . I have been really delighted with the zeal of some of the poor people. Currie's Close is one of the lowest and worst districts in the parish; and there was not a mortal man but would have exclaimed, 'Can any good come out of it?' Well, there lives a humble widow there, a good woman, and six hours had not elapsed after my speech, till in Currie's Close,—from scavengers, and night police, and basket wives, and spunk (match) sellers, and beings who live no mortal man can

tell how,—she had collected not less than twelve shillings. At the close of my address, there was another widow, who lives aloft in the Cowgate, and may be seen in fair weather and foul sitting with a basket of eggs before her, below the Tron church, who came forward and gave me five shillings. Mackenzie and Ross* were conversing with me at the time. When I showed Mackenzie what she had given and what she was, the tears started into his eyes; he is the very living realisation of his father's 'Man of Feeling.' There lives in No. 8, Cowgate Head a poor family of the name of Bryce. They have a daughter deaf and dumb. Some two years ago I took some trouble to get that unfortunate creature employment, and succeeded. The mother came up to me last night and said, 'Ye'll no' mind me, sir, but we havena's forgot what you did for our poor lassie; and if you would give me a card, my man works at Sunbury distillery, and he thinks he would get some siller there on Saturday, when the wages are paid.'

"Hoping that you will lay a hand on the oars, in haste, &c."

A few weeks previous to the date of the above letter, the venerable mother of Mr. Guthrie died at Brechin On leaving Arbirlot, he made her a promise (most faithfully kept), that he would never allow more than three months to pass without going north to see her. Aged and frail, and thus unable for the journey to visit him in Edinburgh, it is pleasant to think that she was yet spared to learn of her son's ever increasing usefulness and influence. She was confined to bed for nearly two years before her death; but no one followed with more lively and prayerful interest than she the course of events in the Church from 1838 onwards, in which her son took so decided a part.

* The late James Mackenzie, Esq., W.S., and the late Alexander Ross, Esq., senior member of the Supreme Council of Bengal, both special friends Mr. Guthrie, and members of his congregation.

In his letters to her, Mr. Guthrie entered into many details both personal and public, which he knew would interest her in the seclusion of her chamber.

"*Edinburgh, 6th September*, 1839.

"My dear Mother,—I was glad to see by Clementina's letter that you were keeping about your *ordinar*'. For this we have all reason to be thankful. At your age you cannot expect robust health. It is a great matter that you are not racked with violent pain, and that your bodily distress is not such as to discompose seriously your mind, and render it unfit for spiritual occupations, or to be a serious alloy in spiritual enjoyments, as sometimes happens. The celebrated Hall suffered such excruciating agony as rendered him often incapable of thinking, and obliged him to take great doses of laudanum. Our earthly tabernacle must sooner or later break up; and if the tent is taken down without violence, gently and quietly, it is a great mercy; though, indeed, the Christian may not be very careful how it is taken down, when it is to be exchanged for a building of God, a house not made with hands, and eternal in the heavens. We seem sometimes to forget, when we cower down before the tempest, and look before us with a fearful eye on the mighty billows that are rolling on—we seem to forget what the sailor-boy said, 'My father's at the helm.' We should be careful for nothing, but by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make our wants known unto God. What a substantial reason for that—what a strong ground and foundation for unbounded confidence in this—'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' I hope you are enjoying the comfort of such views and assurances. Put much trust in God. Let us pray, 'Lord, increase our faith'—that we may have great faith, and that then it may be said unto us, 'According to your faith be it unto you.' His own people have nothing to fear. It is very true, none of us can understand his errors; but no more can we understand, or measure, the mercy and love of God and Jesus Christ. . . . .

"You will be wondering how we got on at Torryburn. I played myself all the week, and preached once each of the two Sabbaths I was there. I got a boat occasionally, and rowed the children about in the harbour; and to show my improvement in naval tactics, I must tell you that with

Doig on board, and two men to row against a strong back-going stream tide, I steered the boat, in a dark night, across the Forth from Borrowstoness, the river being there about four miles broad. I got a light for my mark to steer to, and put in the boat most fairly into the harbour; so perhaps the folks will have more cause than ever to say that I am an old man-of-war's man! . . . .

"We have had, since I returned, a meeting about our newspaper. Miller,* I may say, is engaged, and will be here, I expect, in the course of two or three weeks. His salary is to begin with £200, and mount with the profits of the paper. I think this too little, but I have no doubt to see it double that sum in a year or two. Johnstone to be the publisher, we advancing £1,000, and he will need other two. I am down with Brown, Candlish, and Cunningham for £25 each. A few individuals only have as yet been applied to, and already £600 of the £1,000 has been subscribed. . . . .

"Mrs. Coutts,† and I may say almost every right-thinking person, is greatly interested in the work of revivals going on at Kilsyth, Dundee, and elsewhere. Some of us ministers are to have a meeting upon the subject on Monday, when we are to consider what steps should be taken in the matter. I have heard accounts from such a variety of quarters, as leave no room to doubt that there is a great work of the Spirit going on, and going on most orderly and Scripturally. We have much need of them [revivals] everywhere. I have a valley of dry bones down in that Cowgate, where it were well that there were a shaking. Though the outward demonstrations are not to be wondered at, I am glad that they have been restrained, so that the enemies of good may have no occasion to make a mock of what is good, nor Satan, as Dr. Chalmers expresses it, 'get a fool's cap put on the Lord's work.'"

In reference to the latter part of this letter, it will interest not a few of our readers (though we must interrupt the narrative for the purpose) if we here quote some extracts from a note-book of Dr. Guthrie's, in which

* Hugh Miller, the well-known geologist, and editor of the *Witness* newspaper, which was started shortly after this time in the interests of the Non-Intrusion party within the Church.

† See "Memoir and Correspondence of Mrs. Coutts," by Rev. W. M. Hetherington, D.D., LL.D.

he jotted down at the time his own impressions, when, shortly after thus writing to Brechin, he visited Kilsyth, that he might see for himself something of the work of God then in progress. The venerable minister of that parish (Rev. William Burns, afterwards Dr. Burns), who was honoured, along with his apostolic son, in connection with the awakening there, was an uncle of Mrs. Guthrie.*

" . . . . Met plain man in boat [the canal-boat]. Soon the Revival became topic of conversation. All listened with solemnity and interest. More religious conversation in these boats for last six weeks than for six years before. Felt a disposition I never felt so strongly before to make religious and searching remark. The man, a plain, shrewd man, no enthusiast. He said many in the parish were like himself, did not know what to think of it; but said there was, beyond doubt, a great change and reformation. He knew cases. Kilsyth used to be full of discord and rudeness, it was now the reverse; mentioned case of farmer in neighbourhood who used always to get his turnip-fields destroyed and pillaged; nothing of the kind this year,—religion had guarded them better than an armed force; and many young greatly changed. He did not approve of meetings kept late. A gentleman mentioned that on one occasion some speaker was exhorting the people to go away, else they could not serve their masters; when a master stood up, and said they had never wrought so well as they were doing now. . . . .

" We met last night at eight. After service, which closed about eleven o'clock, two girls under deep and serious impressions, along with some others, were waiting. I was much struck with this, that none appeared ashamed of religion. The danger, indeed, I would take to be the other way: fostered, it may be, by the indiscreet attention paid to young converts. I preached last night. The people very much exhausted, as there had been services all Sunday and Monday nights. In expressing afterwards some fear lest these *whole* night services might prejudice people's minds against the work and pushed into extreme and extravagant lengths, I said that

* Our readers will find a full account of the Kilsyth Revival in two volumes by the late Professor Islay Burns—"The Pastor of Kilsyth," and "Life of Rev. William C. Burns, missionary to China."

there were good people who might not be able to approve of these meetings, and might thereby be indisposed towards a work which they would otherwise rejoice in and favour. The singing was remarkably loud and cordial, and an air of devoutness among the people. . . . . Ninety young communicants * within two months, from the ages of seventy to twelve. A boy of twelve. They were constrained to admit him, even the ministers who were prepossessed against such early admissions. Of the ninety, almost the whole were under the most solemn and serious impressions. This morning we met at a quarter past nine, when I was to address the young communicants. I was impressed with the youth of many of them.

"I was vexed to hear from Mrs. Coutts of —— calling on the unconverted to come forward and sit in certain conspicuous seats. The manse people have not mentioned this; so I hope it does not meet with their approbation. Martin, I understand, was much distressed with it. . . . .

"We now left for the church, and were rapidly passed by an old woman in the dress and darkness of an underground population,† who threw, as she hurried by, a most hungry-like, expressive look in Mr. Burns' face, as she exclaimed, 'John's no changed yet, but ah! Mr. Burns, I am a changed woman.' She shot past without another word; and I was glad to find that the minister, who exercises great caution, had good hopes of her. . . . .

"As we were descending the hill to the village, admiring the beauty of the vale, from which the mists of a cloudy morning were then rising and rolling up the hill sides, we were met by two females, whose countenances betrayed their errand. 'My sister is in great distress,' said the elder of the two, pointing to a younger one beside her, apparently about the age of twenty-five. She did not need to say so; her hanging head, red eyes—red with weeping—and bowed-down frame, told her tale. She wept and sobbed on the way to the manse, where we returned with them. Mr. Burns left me to deal with the parties. I found that the eldest sister had been brought under serious impressions many years ago; had been herself for long months under most profound and distressing views of sin; so that, though she sought her God and Saviour many a dark night by herself, alone in the fields and by the dyke-sides, she

* The expression "young communicants" is manifestly here employed, not with reference to age, but to describe persons who seek admission to the Lord's Table for the first time.

† Women at that period were employed in coal-pits.

never received comfort till one night, when out alone praying, she was so impressed with the truth, that it seemed as if she heard Christ saying to her, 'Did I not pay out the ransom, the full ransom, for thy sins on Calvary?'

"The sister was a most interesting-looking young woman. (I could not but remark how a woman never forgets her personal appearance. She looked like an only daughter who had lost her mother; like a sister who had lost an only brother. Deep thought and sorrow were lined on her face; and yet, though hers had been sleepless nights, and she literally went mourning all the day long, I remarked how neatly her hair was braided, and how gracefully both cap and shawl were assorted upon her head.) She had been all along a very passable Christian, was much respected, and, I learned from Mrs. Burns, had been for some time employed as a distributor of tracts. By her own account she had been contented with a fair profession; but she had never seen her sins and the corruption of her heart as she saw them now. She trembled all over, and cried most bitterly; while the constant answer to the 'Why are you so much distressed?' was, 'Oh, the deep, deep corruption of my heart!'"

* * * * *

The true nature of the Revival movement was keenly canvassed. On his return to Edinburgh Mr. Guthrie, whose visit to Kilsyth convinced him that a genuine work of God's Spirit was in progress there, thought it his duty to bear some public testimony on the point. With this view, as he stated to his people, he preached on two successive Sabbaths, in Old Greyfriars, from the text Matthew vii. 16—"Ye shall know them by their fruits." These sermons made a profound impression at the time; and we have met persons who, after the lapse of thirty-four years, remember both their subject and their substance. We quote some passages from Mr. Guthrie's MSS.:—

"The spies went into the land of Canaan and returned with a bunch of grapes as proof of its fertility. I have

visited the parish of Kilsyth; and while things have been both said and done there which I cannot approve, while impressions have been made on some that will vanish away like the morning mist from their own hills (for God never sowed wheat but the devil sowed tares), yet I am satisfied that a wonderful work has been done there. I cannot tell you all; but in facts which came under my own observation I can show, as it were, a bunch of the grapes of Eschol."

* * * * *

"A friend of mine, whilst I was in that quarter, was walking alongst a field skirted by a wood. She heard the sound of singing. It was not the song of the herdboy to beguile his weary time. It was the music that broke the silence of Philippi's gaol, when Paul and Silas chanted in chains their midnight hymn. No church, no house was near that lonely glen; drawn by curiosity, she quietly approached the place from whence, mingled with the song of birds and nature's melody, the sound of a nobler melody was coming. As she neared the spot the Psalm died away; but then a shrill tender voice rose in accents of solemn prayer; and what was her delight—as under cover of the trees she looked upon that little church—to see (when they thought no eye saw them, no ear heard them but God's), a little band of boys who had retired there to pray. Call you that delusion? I say, happy 'delusion!' 'Suffer little children,' says Christ, 'to come unto me.' Happy had it been for many a parent—it had saved many a mother a broken heart, had the son who has been a curse to her been under such a 'delusion!'"

* * * * *

"The difficulty at Kilsyth is not, as here, how to get people to the church, but the difficulty has almost been to get them away from it, so that the common business of life might not be neglected. It was a marvellous sight to me, at their meal hours, to see men and women in their every-day and working attire, instead of loitering in groups on the streets discussing the news or talking scandal, assembled in the house of God. It was what I had never seen before.

"Not that this will continue; because the means of permanently maintaining it are not in any minister's power. But am I to be told that, were it possible, it would be fanaticism to keep an open church every night? What is it to keep an open theatre? What is it to keep open public-houses? The place which has proved to many a poor soul the way to hell is to be kept open; but it is 'fanaticism,' is it, to keep open the

way to heaven? The play-house and the public-house are to open wide their portals every night; but the house of God is to be nailed up. Oh, what an outcry is raised if people linger in God's house hearing of the love of Christ till midnight has rung from the tower; but let the theatre discharge its votaries at the very same hour, and not one of all these voices would be lifted up against it. In the words of the prophet, 'There was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.'

"Men speak with the tongue of the country they come from; the scorner speaks the tongue of the country he goes to." . . .

Returning now to our narrative,—it is pleasant to know that Mr. Guthrie was not without encouragement in his own Edinburgh parish:—

"*Edinburgh, 16th April*, 1841.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,— . . . . My elders are doing much good; and I have seen much of it of late, in reference to the approaching communion. For example, there was Mrs. R. here as a young communicant. Neither she nor her husband, who has also come, had ever communicated. They had not been, indeed, in the habit of going to any church at all, till St. John's was opened. They were visited by Messrs. Elder and Allardice. They were offered seats; they come to church, are never out of it; they have the worship of God morning and evening in their house. Both seem under very serious impressions, and deeply affected; and they are now prepared, in solemnity and deep humility, to go to the Lord's Table. Many other no less pleasing instances I could mention. This day I was in the house of a man of the name of Stewart, who is a tinsmith, carries on a good business, and is a sober, decent, and respectable man in the eyes of the world. He has a wife and family; they had fallen out of the habit of frequenting a house of God. They were joined to no church, and, I believe, seldom went to any. Since St. John's was opened, they have not been absent at a diet.

"I was very sorry to hear that you had been so poorly. May the Lord accompany these repeated trials with His blessing. You have many comforts to be thankful for; much there is to sweeten the cup, compared with many whom I have occasion to see here, whose misery is specially pitiable, because they not only have few comforts in this life, but eternity is dark to them. They live without comfort in this world, and without any hope for the next."

This was the last letter Mrs. Guthrie received from her son. The repeated illnesses to which he alludes gradually broke up the frail "tabernacle," and the last occurred while Mr. Guthrie was in Brechin seeking to recruit his own health, in May, 1841. On the 18th of that month his mother passed peacefully away, in her 78th year. The same day he penned the following letter to his worthy elder, David Key, the Arbirlot weaver:—

"My dear Friend,—Your letter to my mother had hardly reached this, when she was in glory.

"I am now much better; I may say, well again. I am much gratified by your kind inquiries. I had overwrought myself in Ireland, speaking every day for a fortnight, travelling over a great extent of the country, with meals at irregular hours, constant shifting of beds, and little sleep—not above four hours on an average per night for more than a fortnight, was too much for me. I was ill for some ten days in Edinburgh after my return; and, wearied out with the Sacrament,* came down here much exhausted, and so was taken ill again. But now I have cause to be thankful that I am so much better.

"I have been detained here for some days past on account of my mother's illness. I found her so poorly that we did not expect, when I reached Brechin, that she would have survived so long. For these three last days she had revived considerably, and we were flattering ourselves that she might be spared to us for some time longer yet. The Lord has ordered it otherwise. We have lost one of the best of mothers, and Jesus has got another trophy of His love and grace in heaven. She has been most gently and mercifully dealt with, having in a sense hardly tasted of death. This morning, when I went to make worship in her house, I found her in a low state, and was alarmed to find that she had almost no pulse at the wrist. I sent for my brother the doctor, and after I had spoken some words to her, and reminded her of promises to the comfort of which she had a gracious right, her mouth was twisted for a moment, her eyes turned back in her head, and

* In Scotland there are various services preparatory to and connected with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper.

while I was praying, in one or two minutes she breathed her last, and ascended to glory. While we mourn the loss of a precious mother, we have comfort unspeakable. I may say she was a mother in Israel.

"As to the Church below, our poor suffering Church, I have great hopes of a resolute Assembly. . . .

"With my prayers for your welfare, and kindest wishes to you and all friends,

"Believe me, my dear David, yours most truly,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

These quiet weeks in Brechin, with the hallowed memories awakened by a mother's departure, formed a welcome breathing time, and Mr. Guthrie returned to Edinburgh, strengthened in body and quickened in spirit. From that time forth, heaven possessed to him a new attraction; and when he realised in October last (1872) that the congestion of the lungs which then attacked him in a most threatening form must either be checked at once, or would, as seemed more likely, rapidly and fatally increase: "How strange," he exclaimed, "to think that within twenty-four hours, I may see my mother and my Saviour!"

Dr. Guthrie's reputation as a preacher, established the first Sunday he stood in the pulpit of Old Greyfriars, continued year by year to advance. He was beset by ceaseless requests from all quarters to preach public sermons of all kinds. In his Autobiography Dr. Guthrie mentions one of these. It is to the same occasion that Mr. J. R. Dymock refers as follows:—"On his first appearance in St. George's (October 28, 1838) to plead the cause of the Senior Female Society, the crowd, before the doors were opened, extended halfway across the

square. In one aspect this proved disappointing, as the richer portion of the would-be hearers found their way to an adjoining chapel, which on that occasion enjoyed the benefit of Mr. Guthrie's popularity in a larger collection than fell to the Society for which he pleaded; St. George's having been at once taken possession of by broad shoulders, who, though they did little to promote the interests of the Society, could stand the terrific crush, amid which some individuals were trampled on and others fainted." Though his own church of St. John's was built for the poor, and in a locality repulsive to riches and rank, yet its pulpit ere long drew all manner of persons down the steep tortuous street where it stands, named of old the Nether Bow. On December 16, 1840, he wrote thus to his brother:—

"All the sittings in the area of my church are claimed, and no small proportion of the parties asking for these sittings belong to the Dissenters. We will see, by-and-by, I expect, but three parties in the country—Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Independents; and the sooner it comes to that the better. I had Fox Maule and his lady in St. John's on Sabbath. . . . . I was introduced to Stewart, of the Haddington Burghs, a Sabbath or two ago, when he was in church. And since I am begun with the great folks who pay us a visit, it may entertain my mother to mention, moreover, that some six weeks ago we had the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland. And one day I was not a little tickled to find,—after employing the stand the British made at Waterloo, in consequence of their expectation of assistance, as an illustration of some part or other in the discourse,—I was not a little tickled to find that the Marquis of Douro had been sitting in the elders' seat, under my nose. Of course, I neither mentioned Waterloo nor Wellington, and perhaps the lad never discovered the thing!"

He had scarcely been two years in Edinburgh till a

representation was made to him from influential quarters as to the importance of his being transferred to Regent Square Church in London, then vacant. In reference to this he says, in a letter to his mother at the time—"I consider it perhaps the most important place in connection with our Church." Again, in February of that same year he writes:—"I had Duff* and some others dining with me the other day. Duff was keen for me to go out to India. Dunlop declared that Lord Medwyn would take out a prize warrant, seeing that he is risking some five or six hundred pounds in the new church (St. John's) on the understanding that I was to be minister thereof."

Mr. Dunlop's humorous reference here is explained in a letter Mr. Guthrie wrote, about the same date, to Lord Medwyn himself. Referring to a suggestion which had reached his lordship's ear, that he (Mr. Guthrie) might throw up his new parish for another, and what to many would be a more attractive sphere, he says—

"No man can foretell what he may do, or what it may be his duty to do, but I can tell what are my present feelings on that subject. I came to Edinburgh with the view of being the poor man's minister, and it was only, my lord, by being told that my congregation would consist mainly of plain, unlettered, humble people, that I was prevailed on to leave my country charge. I did not think that I was qualified to [influence] the other class; and

* Alexander Duff, D.D., LL.D., whom Dr. Guthrie was accustomed to designate "the prince of missionaries."

were I placed as minister of this church, unfettered and unshackled, then I would not leave it for the noblest congregation in Edinburgh, even though I could persuade myself that for such a congregation I was a suitable minister."

The following narrative of his early intercourse with Lord Medwyn forms one of the Sketches which Dr Guthrie wrote within a few weeks of his death, with the view, had he been spared, of incorporating them with his Autobiography. It will be read with no common interest, now that the Episcopalian judge and the Presbyterian minister have both, as we fondly believe, met again in that better country where denominations and distinctions find no place:—

"I may mention a judge, with whom, although in many respects we had no sympathy with each other, I was brought into intimate relations. This was Lord Medwyn. He was the son of Forbes, the great banker, a benevolent and patriotic man, and had long years before, associated with some others of the same spirit as himself, set up and fostered a savings bank in Edinburgh. In fact, in opposition to Dr. Duncan of Ruthwell, he claimed to be the originator and author of savings banks, esteeming, and justly esteeming, *that* to be a greater honour than his seat on the bench—than having become what the people call a 'paper lord.'

"On learning that we were about to try to build a church, and revive the old parochial system, so soon as we got the necessary funds, Lord Medwyn kindly pro-

posed to those who had been managers with him of the savings bank, which had been by this time supplanted by the National Savings Bank, that some £1,600 or £1,700 of their unclaimed residue of moneys lying in the bank when its affairs were wound up, and which had belonged to parties that had disappeared, or been long dead, should be given to us.

"This was all the more generous and noble in Lord Medwyn in respect of this, that he was an extremely bigoted Episcopalian—a thoroughly good and devout man, who, nevertheless, cherished an antipathy to the Covenanters, and, had he lived in their days, would no doubt have persecuted them with a good conscience.

"This came out on two early occasions of my intercourse with his lordship; although at the time, he being a comparative stranger to me, I did not understand the reason why, and therefore blurted out what must have been more plain than pleasant to one who regarded the Covenanters with a sort of holy horror. On the first occasion, he called on me in Argyll Square in connection with the generous proposal made of appropriating nearly £2,000 to our help out of the savings bank residue. He looked round the few modest prints that adorned the walls of my dining-room, making no remark till he came to one of James Guthrie, the martyr, a leading spirit of his day, who was the second man—the martyr Argyll being the first—to die for the cause of the Covenant at the restoration of that incarnate scoundrel, Charles the Second. So soon as his eyes fell on this picture, Lord Medwyn, to my

surprise, started as if he had seen a serpent, and turning sharply round on me, said, 'I hope, Mr. Guthrie, you have nothing to do with that man?' Had I known at the time how intense a Scotch Episcopalian Lord Medwyn was, my esteem and respect for so good a man would have made me more careful to avoid wounding his feelings. It was well, perhaps, I did not know, but came bluntly and frankly out with this—'Yes, my lord, we think that man did more honour to the name than any that ever bore it!'

"As time wore on, and the battle thickened, and the Church got deeper into collision with the courts of law, and I went forth, with other ministers, to preach in the parishes of the deposed ministers of Strathbogie,—trampling publicly on the interdict of the Court of Session, which forbade me to preach anywhere in their parishes,—and openly assailed the judges (probably in no very measured terms) for their outrageous attempt to stifle the voice of truth and infringe on the blood-bought liberties of the Scottish people, Lord Medwyn's wrath boiled over. He wrote me a long letter; accusing me, among other offences, of having deceived him—seeing that, had he known what I was, and how I would go up and down the country attacking the judges and bringing the courts of law into contempt, he would never have agreed that any money of the old savings bank should have been applied to build a church for me.

"After giving myself four-and-twenty hours to cool down, I returned a very tight answer to his lordship;

and in proof of my assertion that I had not deceived him, but that he had deceived himself, I referred him to the newspapers of the day, where he would find that at my election by the Town Council to the Old Greyfriars parish, I was keenly opposed by two parties—the one composed of Voluntaries, who were for pulling down all Established Churches, the other of Moderates, who were for keeping down the Christian people and upholding patrons and patronage at all hazards. I made what I considered a triumphant defence of myself, and got, as I expected, no answer."

Dr. Guthrie was not aware that he had retained a copy of the letter to which he here refers. It has been found since his death along with Lord Medwyn's letter to which it was a reply. An extract may interest our readers:—

18, *Brown Square*, 31*st March*, 1841.

"My Lord,—

* * * * *

"I regret the circumstances which called me in duty to take steps whereby I have forfeited the good opinion of one for whom I ever entertained, and do still entertain, the sincerest respect.

"I will not enter here into a defence of the part that I have acted; not because I am afraid of doing so, or shrink from any of its consequences. I have counted the cost, and one of the many sacrifices which I anticipated was just the forfeiture of the friendship of some whose esteem I highly value. All I will say, my lord, is, that if you were deceived in respect of me, if you fancied I was a man who had no decided views on Church matters, or would take no decided and active part in expressing them—whoever may have deceived your lordship, I was no party to the deception. On the public matters that now agitate the Church, as far as they were evolved, I always entertained a decided opinion, and on every fitting occasion was in the habit of fearlessly expressing

it. When a 'preacher,' I had, on two different occasions, the offer of a church on condition of modifying my views; and I was enabled, through the grace of God, to sacrifice my temporal interests at the shrine of principle. I was, in 1834, one of the forty-two who voted for entire abolition of patronage, when the principles I advocated were less popular than they are now; and at public meetings and in church courts, on many occasions, I plainly and openly avowed my sentiments; and indeed, my lord, so well known were these that when, against my wishes, I was chosen a minister of Edinburgh, my election was cordially opposed by all the Moderates and Voluntaries in the Town Council. In justice to myself, I have felt it necessary to say this much, and have only farther to add, it is my sincere prayer that the Lord may amply reward you for what you have done in His cause, and that I am not without hope that the church which your lordship was so instrumental in raising may, even through my unworthy instrumentality, be the means of promoting what we have both at heart, the glory of God, and the good of souls.

"With sincere respect, I have the honour to be, &c.,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

To continue the sketch:—

"A few days afterwards I passed him in York Place, and, lifting my hat, got no acknowledgment of my courtesy. It was the first time in my life that I had been fairly cut; and it was not a pleasant sensation. However, respecting his sterling worth, and grateful for the interest he had taken in my poor parishioners, I resolved, if occasion offered, to repeat the experiment a second and even a third time, though it should be attended with no better success. Nor was it; I mentally saying as I passed him and submitting to cut the third, 'Three times is fair play. You will get no more hats from me, my lord!'

"Yet it turned out that we had not parted for ever in this world, and how that fell out I think it due to Lord Medwyn to relate:—

"There was an extraordinary demand for sittings in Old St. John's; and, with the exception of a few pews appropriated to the office-bearers and their families, the whole area of the church was kept sacred to parishioners, and open only to them till the first psalm was sung. Then, on the doors being flung open to the general public, the throng came rushing in like a tide to fill every vacant corner of pew and passage.

"In this state of matters, a respectable-looking woman was one day ushered into my study, who came with a most earnest request that she might get a sitting in the gallery of our church—the only part of it allotted to outsiders or extra-parishioners. She would grudge no money for it. I advised her to seek a sitting elsewhere, as there were hundreds before her making similar application. She looked so much mortified and distressed that I was induced, as she opened the door to leave, to ask her who and what she was. 'The housekeeper of Lord Medwyn,' she said. At once I called her back, told her what her master had done to serve us, and that, thinking that she had on that account a better right to a sitting than almost any other body in the church, I would find accommodation for her in my own family pew until a vacancy in the gallery occurred.

"Well, I resumed my work, the work which she had interrupted; and next morning was thinking no more of Lord Medwyn or the matter when, on hearing my study door open, and turning round to see who the intruder was, what was my astonishment, after the letter

he had written me, and the cool determined way in which he had three times cut me in the street, to see Lord Medwyn himself! Before I had recovered my astonishment he stepped up to me, and said, with a noble generosity of temper, sense of justice, and true Christian humility, 'Mr. Guthrie, before I ask how you are, let me say how sorry I am that I ever wrote you that letter. I have heard from my housekeeper the manner in which you received her and spoke of me, and I have hastened over here to acknowledge my error and tender this apology.'

"I mention this to the honour of his memory, and that we may learn charity, and how much more of the grace of God there may be in those from whom we differ than in ourselves."

APPENDIX.

(A.)

It may interest our readers, and enable them to note the marked alteration between Dr. Guthrie's sermons in early and later years, if we present successively two examples—the former, from his first discourse as a licentiate; and the latter, from one in recent years, which we select on account of its bearing on the subject of the fourth chapter of the Memoir.

I.—FIRST SERMON AS A LICENTIATE.

Marked by Mr. Guthrie "My first Sermon as a Preacher. Preached at Dun, 13th February, 1825." *

Jonah i. 6.—What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God.

In the Old Testament writings, we apprehend, there are frequently hid, under the mere detail of natural events, many of those grand and important doctrines which are peculiar to the Christian religion; and we believe also that it was on this account that many of them are detailed at such length; while to appearance they seem only to affect the worldly prospects of one individual, or the Jewish nation at large.

In the sojourn of the Hebrews, for instance, in the wilderness of Arabia, we see in that mere fact a most apt illustration of a Christian's life; and in their at last gaining the promised land, after many a wandering, we see a figurative representation of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. In the raising of the brazen serpent amidst the expiring Israelites, and in the command to look upon it and they should be delivered from the calamity which God had sent upon them for their sins, we surely see something more than a mere historical event which only affected them. In the elevation of that serpent we see the elevation of Christ on the cross; and in the command given to the Israelites we see a command given

* See Autobiography, p. 65.

to a diseased world, to look unto him, and they shall be saved. Deprive these events of that application, and you rob them of the very point which renders them so interesting to us; for what would it be for us to know that Abraham raised his hand against the life of his only son, unless we saw in Isaac, bound, a trembling victim, to the altar, our Saviour nailed to the cross of Calvary, and exclaiming, in the hiding of his Father's countenance, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In like manner, it appears to us that from the most interesting points in the history of Jonah we may draw many a fact materially affecting us as spiritual beings, and discover in it no faint representation of the deplorable condition in which we are found by the Gospel. Did Jonah disobey the command of God? So have we, not only in Adam, our federal head, but also in the daily sins with which we stand chargeable. Did Jonah flee from the presence of the Lord? So have we, in forsaking Him, the fountain of living waters, and hewing out for ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Was Jonah, in consequence, exposed to imminent danger? So are we in danger of the wrath that is to come, and is never to end. Was he wakened to a sense of his danger in a ship, where he little dreamed of the extremity of his peril? So the Gospel raises its warning voice, and proclaims to each living one of us, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God."

We proceed to show, then:—

I.—That all men are by nature in a state of danger.

II.—The necessity that springs from this, that they should arise and call upon their God.

III.—What they should call for from God.

I.—*That all men are by nature in a state of danger.*

* * * * *

Were we to judge of the truth or falsehood of this statement by observations upon the conduct (not upon the professions) of mankind, we would be very apt to believe it to be false. Men, indeed, in their approaches to God, either in private or in public prayer, confess that their souls are in danger of the coming wrath; but, as if the whole was a piece of solemn mockery, this acknowledgment is made with far more indifference than a man would show about the loss of the merest trifle in his worldly concerns.

How many sleepless nights and how many anxious days,

how many hours of sorrow, and how many seasons of unwearied exertions will that man pass who has discovered that he is in danger of falling back in worldly matters; and with what earnest expectation will he watch for, and with what joy will he hail every favourable turn in the tide of business, until he has regained a sure and steady footing! But if the soul of man is really in danger, do we meet it with any such marks of intense feeling of alarm on that account? No. Or do we witness in the body of mankind any such anxious earnestness to be delivered from the impending danger? No. If such danger does exist, strange to tell, there is nothing in the world occupies men less. They are more afraid of losing a pound or a penny than their souls! One man is occupied in business, and so completely do its cares take possession of his heart, that not a corner is left for the concerns of his soul. From day to day, with undivided attention, he plys his busy task; 'tis his first thought in the morning, 'tis his last thought at night; it will hardly admit time for a hurried prayer, if prayer is said at all; and even while apparently engaged in the solemn duties of the Sabbath, his heart is in pursuit of many a worldly scheme—as if one day in the week was too much time to spend on the eternal interests of his soul.

Now, though we do not affirm — far be it from us to affirm any such thing—that all men have equally lost sight of the welfare of their souls in their keen pursuit after earthly enjoyment, let that enjoyment be what it may,—still, we can appeal to every mind, without fear of contradiction, if the great body of mankind do not appear to live just as if their welfare through eternity was a matter too sure to be questioned; and just as if, therefore, their well-being in time was the only remaining object of their care. But notwithstanding that our conduct in general gives very little proof of our apprehension of danger, we find most unquestionable authority that the curse of a broken law has gone forth against us, and that the punishment of a broken law awaits the closing of the day of God's forbearance. . . . .

He who stands charged by his conscience with the guilt of one single sin, stands exposed to the curse of an offended law. He who hath offended in one point, is guilty of all. Do not then entertain the delusion which is too apt to gain an easy admission into our hearts, "Have I been such a sinner as to expose me to danger?" but recollect that it rather is, "Have I been a sinner at all?" So averse are we to believe that there is nothing before us but a fearful looking for of judgment, so

humbling is it to the human pride, so contrary to all our notions of human dignity and human worth, and so pregnant with every feeling that is calculated to disturb the false peace of our slumbers—that, rather than submit to endure all the horrors of a sense of danger, and all the degradation of such a humbling doctrine, we will institute some favourable comparison between ourselves and others—forget our own sins and increase the guilt of theirs, magnify their defiance and lessen our own; and then, in the full belief that, though danger greatly hangs over them, it cannot surely have the same threatening aspect to us, thank God, like the Pharisee of old, that we are not as the publicans and sinners.

But we appeal to yourselves if it would not be a most strange and a most unwarrantable ground of confidence in a robber to believe, because he was not a murderer, that therefore he had nothing to fear; to waste his days in idle amusement, instead of applying through every channel for the exercise of mercy; and to make his cell a scene of thoughtless and of wanton riot, instead of solemn and serious reflection, just because he was not chargeable with the guilt of a fellow criminal by staining his hands with human blood. If, then, such a mode of reasoning would be false and absolutely ruinous in the case of a criminal who has trampled upon human laws, how much more certainly fatal will it be in the case of us who have despised the counsel and defied the power of God?

Until the words of the sentence are passed by an earthly judge, absurd as it may be to entertain it, still a feeble gleam of hope may be seen in the darkness of a criminal's prospects. It is possible that the evidence against him, though apparently decisive, may still fail in some important particular; it is possible that some means of escape may be tried with success before the day of his doom arrives; and it is still further possible that though both of these grounds of confidence prove false, still the compassion or the weakness of his judge may plead or act so strangely in his favour that he may gain a full and honourable acquittal. But to us, as offending criminals against a Divine law, there are no such favourable possibilities. It is not possible that the proof against us can be deficient, for if one sin—instead of ten thousand which we must all acknowledge—be brought home to your conviction, then the curse falls upon us, as those who have not continued in "all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Neither is it possible that any door of escape can be opened to us, though we were to wander in search of it through boundless space; for where can we go from God's [illegible]

whither flee from His presence? Does death require, think you, the slow hand of disease to effect his purpose? Does he require slowly and gradually to undermine the foundations of our life, or may not he rather get possession of it by an unexpected assault? Might not the inhabitants before the flood have purposed the same thing when the waters overwhelmed them in universal destruction? Might not the dwellers in Sodom and Gomorrah have made an equally fine resolution when the heavens rained fire and brimstone on their devoted heads? Might not Korah and his ungodly company have been engaged in forming some such purpose when the earth clave asunder, and closed over them for ever? Might not every sinner have satisfied the demands of his conscience by a similar purpose, who has, still, been hurried from the scenes of business or of pleasure, without time even for a prayer for mercy, into the solemn presence of an unbending Judge? But even though accident were not to sweep us to another world, ill-prepared to give in our account, still any resolutions of death-bed reformation cannot do away with the necessity that lies on us to awake at present, and call upon our God.

If we believe that the last hours we spend on earth are the best fitted to prepare for heaven, surely gross darkness has come upon us. That soldier, we apprehend, would have very little prospect of success, who deferred to buckle on his armour till the blows were falling upon him. That sailor, we apprehend, would have very little prospect of escape who, though the storm was seen from afar, still refused to seek some place of refuge until it came roaring and raging on in all the horrors of its destruction. And certainly we do apprehend that he who defers his escape from the dangers of the coming wrath until the hand of death shall be laid upon him, stakes his immortal spirit upon a less probable circumstance than any but a madman would stake the merest trifle of his worldly goods. Death is a scene, not of preparation, but of conflict—a solemn and a fearful conflict in the hour and with the powers of darkness. And oh! if the Christian who has long struggled with his spiritual adversaries, who has long wielded the sword of the spirit, who has long known how to use the shield of faith if this well-tried and veteran soldier be hardly able to withstand in that evil day, how can success attend upon him who has newly enlisted under the Christian banner, and been all his lifetime a slave of sin?

We do appeal to yourselves if that is a fit time to escape from the wrath to come, when the poor, expiring sinner is hardly able to lift his head under the load of his sickness,

or when he is tossing in agony, or when he is buried in a lethargy so profound that no answer is given to the questions of affection and friendship, or when, in the ravings of a wandering mind, his loud and unearthly laugh startles the silence of the chamber of death? If, then, you feel any interest for the welfare of your soul through eternity; if you feel any desire to meet God, not clothed in the terrors of an offended lawgiver, but welcoming you with the love of a reconciled Father; if you feel any anxiety to escape the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is never quenched, and to possess the glory that fadeth not, and the inheritance that is never corrupted, repose no longer in your fatal slumbers—awake and call upon your God with all the earnestness of those who know not but this very night their souls may be required of them.

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III.—*What should be sought or called for from God.*

The nature of the danger under which we lie decidedly shows that the main object we have to seek must be to escape from eternal wrath; and he who has reflected at all upon the character of God, or the means by which we have brought ourselves into this dangerous condition, ought to know that there is no way of escape but by the pardon of our sins.

The only difficulty, then, we apprehend, is concerning the means by which this pardon is to be obtained; or the only question is, are we to arise and call upon God for the pardon of our sins, solely and exclusively upon the merits of Christ's righteousness, or also upon some fancied virtue in our own obedience? Now, far be it from us to take upon ourselves to judge of any man's obedience, that being a matter which rests between him and his God; but still, upon the authority of Scripture, we are warranted to assert that a man's own obedience or his own righteousness is nothing better than filthy rags, that by it he cannot be justified before God, and that, therefore, he who trusts to it leans upon a broken reed. Were the robe of Christ's righteousness too narrow to cover us, then we might be excused for putting on filthy rags; were His merits too inconsiderable to justify us before God, then we might not be so much to blame for adding our own works, poor, and wretched, and unprofitable as they have been; and were His rod and His staff not able to support us, even in the valley of the shadow of death, it would be something like a pleasing delusion to believe that we would be the better of a broken reed. But, persuaded as we are that the righteousness

of Christ is the only robe of salvation which will ensure our acceptance with God, persuaded as we are that His merits are so vast that no demerit can be too great which they will not atone for, and persuaded as we are that His rod and His staff are able to console a more disconsolate sinner than ever yet man has been, we hold that he who goes about to seek any other means of escape than this sows the wind and shall reap the whirlwind.

We are indeed sensible that there is something very pleasing in the idea that, as it was by our own deeds that we fell, so by them we shall also rise; that there is something very flattering to our own vanity in the notion that we have obtained an occasion for boasting; and that, therefore, in calling upon you to seek salvation from the hand of another, we have to contend with the natural pride of a depraved heart. But why give heed to the very suggestions which first brought ruin upon our race? Why stand upon such idle fancies when the salvation of your immortal spirit is at stake?

If your eyes are then opened to the storm of divine wrath which, like a black lowering cloud, is about to pour its thunders on your devoted head; if you feel yourself naked, defenceless, and unprepared to brave its fury—seek, we beseech you, the righteousness of Jesus Christ as a covert from the storm and a shelter from the tempest. If you feel yourself to be a traveller in a barren and cheerless desert, where no cloud of mercy interposes to shade you from the sun of God's anger, where your vigour is dried up, and your strength is withered away before it, where your hopes begin to decay and your spirit is sunken within you—seek, we beseech you, the righteousness of Christ as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. If you feel yourself tossed on the billows of despair, and, looking around for some signal of hope, your eye meets nothing but a troubled heaven and a raging sea, and your ear hears nothing but thunder's echoes and the rushing of mighty waters that threaten your destruction, and now you begin to think that the next wave will send your feeble bark to the bottom—then seek, we beseech you, the righteousness of Christ as an anchor of hope within the vail.

There is no aspect, in fact, in which your danger can be viewed in which the righteousness of Christ does not appear fit for your deliverance. Are you under the bondage of sin? The price of your redemption was paid on Calvary. Is there a handwriting against you? It was nailed with your sins to a Saviour's cross. From the crown of the head to the soles of the feet are you wounds and bruises and putrefying sores?

There is a balm in Gilead and a Physician there. Are you defiled with sin and loathsome in your iniquity? There is a fountain opened in Israel for sin and for all uncleanness.

Seek, then, the righteousness of Christ as it consists of that perfect obedience by which He made honourable a dishonoured law, and of that full suffering by which He satisfied the unsatisfied demands of Divine justice; seek it (as ruined) by that faith which is the gift of God; seek it as the groundwork of every blessing which will perfect you in holiness, and prepare you for heaven. For, if you have sought this best of all blessings with success, you are not only delivered from a fearful looking for of judgment, but you are warranted to make incessant application at the throne of God for grace to help you in every time of need; not only are you delivered from the danger of eternal death, but you are authorised to call upon God for means of escaping from those wiles of the devil in which he would hold you for a season in spiritual death.

We know, indeed, that upon the imputation of Christ's righteousness our spiritual enemies are driven from the citadel of our heart; but still we know that, like an enemy unwilling to give up the conquests they had won, they look about and watch every opportunity to make an inroad upon the Christian's peace. Assailed as he is thus on the one hand by Satan and his emissaries, and on the other by the still lingering depravity of a once deeply depraved heart, if left to himself his life would be one continued scene of conflict and defeat; and hence, therefore, if we would not dishonour the Christian cause, and bring disgrace upon the Christian name—if we would not crucify our Lord afresh, and again expose him to an open shame—if we would give no occasion for an unholy shout of triumph from the dark and deadly host that is encamped against us—and if we would stand triumphant against that terrible array, defying all the power and hatred of hell—we must do all this by seeking and obtaining aid of the Holy Spirit.

Though we may feel, by the power of a full assurance of faith, that the glories of the new Jerusalem cannot fail of being ours, still the path that leads to them is one of no common difficulty and no common danger. The man of the world may pass the time of his sojourn here without once feeling an internal struggle, without once smarting under the sting of an accusing conscience, and without once being awakened from his dream of pleasure till he awake to find that he had dreamed of peace and how no peace is to be found; but you who have chosen the Christian course have chosen a

life of no ruinous and inglorious ease; your path is beset with the wiles of the devil, your feet are surrounded by his snares, and you are continually exposed to his open assaults. Slumber not, therefore, for this is an enemy's country; repose not, therefore, for this is not the place of your rest; watch for your souls, watch for the cause, and for the honour of your God; and, as you mingle in the spiritual conflict, cry mightily unto the Lord, that the power of His Spirit would rest upon you, that His grace would be made sufficient for you, and His strength be perfected in your weakness.

II.—SERMON PREACHED IN FREE ST. JOHN'S, EDINBURGH.*

"When he beheld the city, he wept over it."—LUKE xix. 41.

THERE is a remarkable phenomenon to be seen on certain parts of our coast. Strange to say, it proves, notwithstanding such expressions as "the stable and solid land," that it is not the land but the sea which is the stable element. On some summer day, when there is not a wave to rock her, nor breath of wind to fill her sail or fan a cheek, you launch your boat upon the waters, and, pulling out beyond lowest tidemark, you idly lie upon her bows to catch the silvery glance of a passing fish, or watch the movements of the many curious creatures that travel the sea's sandy bed, or, creeping out of their rocky homes, wander its tangled mazes. If the traveller is surprised to find a deep-sea shell embedded in the marbles of a mountain peak, how great is your surprise to see beneath you a vegetation foreign to the deep! Below your boat, submerged many feet beneath the surface of the lowest tide, away down in these green crystal depths, you see no rusting anchor, no mouldering remains of some shipwrecked one, but, in the standing stumps of trees, the mouldering vestiges of a forest, where once the wild cat prowled, and the birds of heaven, singing their loves, had nestled and nursed their young. In counterpart to those portions of our coast where sea-hollowed caves, with sides the waves have polished, and floors still strewed with shells and sand, now stand high above the level of strongest stream-tides, there stand these dead, decaying trees—entombed in the deep. A strange phenomenon, which admits of no other explanation than this, that there the coast-line has sunk beneath its ancient level.

* See "The City, its Sins and Sorrows."

Many of our cities present a phenomenon as melancholy to the eye of a philanthropist, as the other is interesting to a philosopher or geologist. In their economical, educational, moral, and religious aspects, certain parts of this city bear palpable evidence of a corresponding subsidence. Not a single house, nor a block of houses, but whole streets, once from end to end the homes of decency, and industry, and wealth, and rank, and piety, have been engulfed. A flood of ignorance, and misery, and sin, now breaks and roars above the top of their highest tenements. Nor do the old stumps of a forest, still standing up erect beneath the sea-wave, indicate a greater change, a deeper subsidence, than the relics of ancient grandeur and the touching memorials of piety which yet linger about these wretched dwellings, like evening twilight on the hills—like some traces of beauty on a corpse. The unfurnished floor, the begrimed and naked walls, the stifling, sickening atmosphere, the patched and dusty window—through which a sunbeam, like hope, is faintly stealing—the ragged, hunger-bitten, and sad-faced children, the ruffian man, the heap of straw where some wretched mother, in muttering dreams, sleeps off last night's debauch, or lies unshrouded and uncoffined in the ghastliness of a hopeless death, are sad scenes. We have often looked on them. And they appear all the sadder for the restless play of fancy. Excited by some vestiges of a fresco-painting that still looks out from the foul and broken plaster, the massive marble rising over the cold and cracked hearth-stone, an elaborately carved cornice too high for shivering cold to pull it down for fuel, some stucco flowers or fruit yet pendant on the crumbling ceiling—fancy, kindled by these, calls up the gay scenes and actors of other days, when beauty, elegance, and fashion graced these lonely halls, and plenty smoked on groaning tables, and where these few cinders, gathered from the city dust-heap, are feebly smouldering, hospitable fires roared up the chimney.

But there is that in and about these houses which bears witness of a deeper subsidence, a yet sadder change. Bent on some mission of mercy, you stand at the foot of a dark and filthy stair. It conducts you to the crowded rooms of a tenement, where—with the exception of some old decent widow who has seen better days, and when her family are all dead, and her friends all gone, still clings to God and her faith in the dark hour of adversity and amid the wreck of fortune—from the cellar-dens below to the cold garrets beneath the roof-tree, you shall find none either reading their Bible, or even with a Bible to read. Alas! of prayer, of morning or evening

psalms, of earthly or heavenly peace, it may be said the place that once knew them, knows them no more. But before you enter the doorway, raise your eyes to the lintel-stone. Dumb, it yet speaks of other and better times. Carved in Greek or Latin, or our own mother tongue, you decipher such texts as these :—"Peace be to this house;" "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it;" "We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" "Fear God;" or this, "Love your neighbour." Like the mouldering remnants of a forest that once resounded with the melody of birds, but hears nought now save the angry dash or melancholy moan of breaking waves, these vestiges of piety furnish a gauge which enables us to measure how low in these dark localities the whole stratum of society has sunk. . . . .

He who can walk from this neighbouring castle to yonder palace, nor groan in spirit, must have a heart about as hard as the pavement that he walks on. The degradation of humanity, the ragged poverty, the squalid misery, the suffering childhood, the pining, dying infancy—oh, how do these obliterate all the romance of the scene, and make the most picturesque street in Christendom one of the most painful to travel! They call the street in Jerusalem, along which tradition says that a bleeding Saviour bore his cross, the Via Dolorosa; and I have thought that our own street was baptized in the sorrow of as mournful a name. With so many countenances that have misery stamped on them as plain as if it were burned in with a red-hot iron—hunger staring at us out of these hollow eyes—drink-palsied men, drink-blotched and bloated women—sad and sallow infants who pine away into slow death, with their weary heads lying so pitifully on the shoulders of some half de-humanised women—this poor little child, who never smiles, without shoe or stocking on his ulcered feet, shivering, creeping, limping along with the bottle in his emaciated hand, to buy a parent drink with the few pence that, poor hungry creature, he would fain spend on a loaf of bread, but dare not—the whole scene is like the roll of the prophet, "written within and without, lamentations, mourning, and woe." How has it wrung our heart to see a ragged, famished boy looking greedily in at a window on the food he has no one to give him, and dare not touch,—to watch him, as he alternately lifted his naked feet, lest they should freeze to the icy pavement. He starves in the midst of abundance. Neglected among a people who would take more pity on an ill-used horse or a dying dog, he is a castaway upon the land. Of the throngs that pass

heedlessly by him to homes of comfort, intent on business or on pleasure, there is no one cares for him. Poor wretch! oh, if he knew a Bible which none has taught him, how might he plant himself before us, and bar our way to church or prayer-meeting, saying, as he fixed on us an imploring eye, "Pure religion and undefiled before God" is to feed me—is to clothe these naked limbs—is to fill up these hollow cheeks—is to pour the light of knowledge into this darkened soul—is to save me—is not to go to house of God or place of prayer, but first coming with me to our miserable home, "to visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, and keep thy garments unspotted from the world!" . . . .

There needs no other evidence of the fact that irreligion does exist among religious professors, than the cold, callous, and heartless indifference with which many hear of the sins and look upon the sorrows of their fellow-creatures. They could not do so if they were baptized into the nature as well as the name of Jesus Christ. In some cases the loss of a cattle-beast will affect the farmer, the loss of a few pounds on some speculation will distress the merchant, the loss of her raven locks, and the rose upon her cheek, and the fading charms that won admiration, will grieve the woman, more than the loss of immortal souls. Alas! the best of us have cause to pray for a deeper baptism in the spirit of Him, who, beholding the city, wept over it! Blessed Jesus! blessed Saviour, and blessed pattern! how didst thou leave the delights of heaven and thy Father's bosom, on a mission of most generous mercy! Thy love grudged no labour! Thine eye refused no pity! Thine ear was never shut against the story of distress! Thy hand was always ready to relieve the sufferer! From thy cradle to the grave, thy whole life was passed in daily acts of loftiest self-denial, and with the blood trickling down thy brows, and the heavy cross on thy lacerated back, upon thy way to Calvary, to save the vilest wretches and the chief of sinners, how dost thou turn round on us to say, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works." . . . .

Jerusalem was sealed to ruin—doomed beyond redemption. Our brethren, our cities are not so. We have not to mourn as

those who have no hope. As on a summer day I have seen the sky at once so shine and shower, that every rain-drop was changed by sunbeams into a falling diamond, so hopes mingle here with fears, and the promises of the gospel shed sunlight on pious sorrows. Weep, we may; weep, we should,—weep and work, weep and pray. But ever let our tears be such as were shed by Jesus beside the tomb of Lazarus, when, while groaning, weeping, He bade the bystanders roll away the stone —anticipating the moment when the grave at His command would give up its dead, and Lazarus be folded, a living brother, in the arms that, four days ago, had swathed his corpse. Be such our tears. Sustained by such anticipations, we shall work all the better; and all the sooner shall our heavenly Father receive to His embraces the most wretched of these wretched outcasts. Faith may be cast down, but faith cannot be destroyed. There is no reason, because we are "perplexed," ever to "despair." For dark as the cloud looks, it presents one aspect to the world, and another to the Christian. I stand on the side of it that lies next the sun. There, with the sun shining at my back and the black cloud in my eye, I see a radiant bow which spans its darkness, and reveals in heavenly colours mercy to a fallen world. "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

B (p. 387).

EXTRACTS FROM ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. GUTHRIE AT THE OPENING OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, ON 19TH NOVEMBER, 1840.

ONE grand purpose for which this church has been erected, is to try the parochial economy in a large city; and so far as I know, it stands this day alone as a parish church within the burghs of Scotland; and amid all the glory and loveliness of this romantic city, it is not, in my opinion, the meanest jewel in her crown, that here she boasts a church where the gospel will flow as free to the parishioners as the water of their parish well. The founders of our church contemplated a very different state of things from what now exists in many parishes, from what is to be found, for example, in a parish within a stone cast almost of this house; and where, as if in mockery of the able and worthy men on whose back this mountain lies, two ministers have, as parish ministers, the charge of fifty thousand people. In our ancestors wisdom was

justified of her children; and they considered a charge of a thousand people ample enough for any man to manage. Nor did they leave the minister alone to manage it. No more than the captain of a ship of war is the only officer on her deck, was the minister to be the only man in his parish clothed with ecclesiastical authority; he was to be aided, supported, and surrounded by a staff of officers, a band of efficient elders and deacons; and as our ancestors thought that a minister had charge enough who had in his parish a thousand people, they thought an elder had charge enough who had in his district some ten or twenty families. They never dreamt of such a state of things as we have in our days in Scotland now. I can point to districts with the population of a parish, and parishes with the population of a county. Nor in the good and olden time did the elder fill a merely honorary or secular office; he did something else, and something better than stand by the plate, and vote in Presbytery or General Assembly. He visited the sick, his post was often at the bed of death, he counselled the erring, he went forth to the wilderness and brought the wanderer back to the fold, and was at once a father and a friend, a counsellor and a comfort to the families of his charge; he was known to all of them, and all of them were known to him; his name was a household word, and he could tell the name of every man, woman, and child within his bounds; and, frequently discharging offices, both of temporal and spiritual kindness, he thus acquired within his small and manageable locality, a moral influence that was omnipotent for good. . . . .

Our present undertaking is intended to remedy these evils. We wish from its ruins to rebuild the ancient economy, and to restore what is not to be found nowadays in any burgh in all broad Scotland, a manageable parish, split up into districts, each containing ten or twenty families, with a free gospel in its parish church, with a school where the children of the poorest may receive at least a Bible education, and with its minister, its elders, and its deacons, each in the active discharge of the duties of his own department. Such is the machinery that, before many weeks are gone, we trust to see in beautiful and blessed operation in the parish of St. John's. And what good, it may be asked, do we expect to follow? No good at all, unless God give the blessing. Besides the machinery, we must have the moving power; but if He smile upon our labours we enter the field confident of victory. What this system has done in former days it can do again—and we have no fear though the eyes of enemies should look on,

we are trying no novel, never-before-tried experiment—our fathers tried it, and they triumphed in the trial—and with the same seed, the same sun, and the same soil, should not the same cultivation produce a harvest as abundant? . . . .

One great advantage of a parochial church with its full complement of machinery, will be found to lie in its drawing together the different classes of society, and narrowing, if not annihilating, the gulf which now yawns wide and deep and dangerously between them. This total separation of the higher from the lower, of the more decent from the less decent, of the wealthier from the poorer classes of society, has originated much of the irreligion, the crime, and misery that deform the face of our city. It is very easy to blame the poor, but we must say that they have been grievously sinned against, at the least as much sinned against as sinning. On all sides beset, surrounded, besieged by temptation, they have been left to themselves, and have had too much cause to say, "No man cared for my soul." Visited by none whose good opinion they had to gain, and, having gained, to keep, they have never felt one of the strongest human motives to the virtues and decencies of life. Let a man of Christian character and kindness visit their too long neglected homes; let him prove himself their friend and counsellor; let him show that he has their own best welfare and that of their children at his heart; that he rejoices in their well-doing, and is grieved with their sins; and, with all the certainty of a law of nature, there will spring up in their breasts a desire to gain and to keep the regard of this kind and Christian friend. It were difficult to tell how many families in this city might have been saved from ruin by the timely counsels, and help, and kindness of such a visitor, especially in those periods of temporary distress to which the working classes are exposed,—for example, such a season as visited Edinburgh two winters ago (1837-38) when for some six or eight weeks there was no work for many, and of course no wages.

The hand of Providence visits a family with sickness, or by some accident the head of the house is thrown out of employment, and, whatever be the cause, the family are brought to the very verge of want; the children cry for bread, and their mothers have none to give them. What is to be done? A man won't sit down and see his children pine away with hunger before his eyes. Their credit with the shopkeeper is exhausted; they are either ashamed to ask assistance of their neighbours, or their neighbours are unable to afford it. They have too much principle as yet to steal, and too much pride to beg: in

these circumstances of great distress, the eye that looks round for help falls on the sign and shop of the pawnbroker, its open door invites them in, and when they have once crossed the fatal threshold, in nine cases out of ten, their ruin is sealed. As the readiest means of meeting a present and pressing evil, one article of furniture after another is carried to the pawn; and though I have known them bear much before parting with their Bible and Sabbath attire, the fatal Saturday night at length arrives when the key of the pawnbroker is turned upon these; and now, the house of God is deserted, the seat that once knew them knows them no more, and from step to step, dragging their children along with them, down they sink into the lowest misery, till the once well-spent Sabbath is passed by the children in play upon the streets, and passed by the degraded parents in drunkenness and dissipation. "They drink to forget their poverty and remember their misery no more." I believe, I *know* this to be the sad history of many families in this city; and all this evil might have been averted had they known one into whose arms, instead of a pawnbroker's, they could have cast themselves, in whose sympathising ear they could have told their tale of suffering, and to whose kind, and wise, and Christian efforts to relieve them, they could have trusted in the hour of trial. In the elders and deacons with whom we propose to stock this parish, such guides and guardians will be found, and we have no doubt at all that their labours will demonstrate that the parochial economy fairly, freely, and vigorously wrought, offers the best remedy to those evils which assessments, and police, and prisons, and gibbets, may in some measure restrain, but never can eradicate.

END OF VOLUME I.

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